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The Week

THE MacDonald government has won an important vote of confidence in the House of Commons, and will probably remain in power at least until June, and perhaps for a much longer period. The victory comes by grace of the dwindling but strategically important Liberals, who lent their approval, not because they are pleased with the Labor government's record, but that they are displeased with what the Tories might do. While the MacDonald government has on the whole been a disappointment, there is every reason to believe that the Tories would have done much worse; and certainly on the vital question of India they would have operated in a manner to produce open warfare long before this. It is to be hoped that, with its fresh lease of life, the MacDonald government will use new vigor in its attack upon the various urgent domestic problems which confront it, the most pressing being, it is needless to remark, unemployment.

STUNG by the almost unanimous disapproval of the veto of the Wagner bill for a nation-wide system of labor exchanges with federal aid and supervision, the Department of Labor is giving publicity to its scheme for enlarging the existing Federal Employment Service with funds already appropriated. Branches are being set up in a number of states; these, it is announced, will cooperate with such state exchanges as there are. In other words, Secretary Doak is proceeding along the main lines laid out in the Wagner bill, but without as much money as the bill provided, without any appropriation to encourage the setting up of additional state bureaus, without the civil-service restrictions on appointments contained in the Wagner bill, and without the supervisory board of employer and employee representatives. There is little assurance that the Doak activities will not turn out to be more effective as a source of patronage and a political machine than as a system of employment exchanges, and in any event, they are bound to be inadequate. Meanwhile, Miss Mary Van Kleeck of the Russell Sage Foundation has pointed out in an article in The Survey that the reasons given in the President's veto message are based upon gross misstatements of fact. The placements of 1,300,000 applicants per year which Mr. Hoover attributed to the existing federal service were all made by state and local agencies. And the Wagner bill would not have interrupted any function now performed by the federal service; transition to a new and enlarged system would have been made without a gap.

AN INGENIOUS plan to furnish unemployment relief which shall be neither charity nor insurance has been set down in a privately printed pamphlet by Mr. Henry Wise of Cambridge. It is simply a system by which the unemployed might borrow. At present, of course, the credit of an unemployed person is usually a minus quantity. The plan would furnish him with a good credit standing by legislation which would make the employers and working employees responsible for the notes of those borrowing under the system. A series of public unemployment loaning banks would furnish the money to coöperative credit unions, which would

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disburse it to the individuals. Anyone might borrow, during a year of unemployment, half of what he had received in wages during the preceding fifty-two weeks. When he regained work, his note would fall due, and would be payable in weekly instalments. The employers and employees of the industry in question would have to meet the payments of those notes which the individuals failed to pay, one-third of the sum coming from the employer, and two-thirds from the employees, presumably being checked out of their wages. We cannot see that this plan is in any way preferable to a good insurance plan. It would certainly be equally difficult to administer. It would levy the wage loss of a depression largely on the future purchasing power of the workers, instead of building up funds in advance. Those unemployed through no fault of their own would in honor have to bear the entire loss, if they could. And, due to the necessity of charging interest and developing financial institutions to handle the credit, it would probably be more costly to operate.

MAYOR Walker of New York has now issued a voluminous reply to the various charges against him. Its general intellectual level may be judged from the fact that he accuses his critics of being Russian sympathizers—something which, even if true, would seem to have little relevance to the question whether he is incompetent and ought to be removed from office. Here and there, of course, the document (it may be taken for granted that the airy Jimmy didn't write it) makes a fairly good case on specific points; but as a whole, it is a specious and feeble defense of a record which is indefensible. Every sensible New Yorker knows that the city government is shot through with corruption. If he is sufficiently sensible he also knows that the legislative committee will probably be unable to unearth more than a small part of this corruption, and that even if it does, no lasting reform is likely to be effected. Tammany may be ousted from control for a term or two; but as long as the present scheme of things continues, Tammany or somebody else will profit by it. It would help a good deal if administration were taken out of politics and put under the control of a small group of expert, professional city managers; but it would help still more if we got a new set of moral values for our civilization.

AN ENIGMATIC Associated Press dispatch from Russia states that a change in policy has been inaugurated according to which the system of wage payment will hereafter be on the piece basis. But piece work has long been practised in parts of Soviet industry and has been commented upon by numerous observers. The dispatch goes on to state that the various trusts will contract with each other for the sale and purchase of goods, that these orders will be financed as heretofore by the government banking system, but that the trust or plant contracting to produce the order will bear the responsibility for making good on its promises, and that its personnel will prosper or suffer accordingly. If this means anything, it appears to mean that funds for the payment of future wages, salaries and profits will not be forthcoming if the goods are not delivered. What then? A Socialist plant cannot be allowed to go bankrupt and cease production because it has no funds, as a capitalist and competitive one can. Nor, under a thoroughly planned economy, can contracts be made in a completely free market, without central supervision. Until further information is received, the full significance of this reported change cannot be understood. In so far as any change has been made, however, it was probably dictated by the difficulties which have all along been predicted when the newly constructed plants began to go into production on a large scale. With a severe shortage of skilled workers and technicians, it will be difficult indeed for the engineers of the Five Year Plan to fulfill the program. Speed-up resting on propaganda and popular enthusiasm cannot work miracles. Doubtless those in responsible positions are looking for more substantial incentives.

THE American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers is one of the most aggressive and intelligently led minor unions in the country, and its present strike to organize all the plants in the Philadelphia market deserves to succeed. Three times in the past two years this union has voluntarily accepted wage cuts in the plants which it controlled in order to enable them to compete with the non-union sections of the industry. The total reduction in wages and labor costs thus brought about aggregates about 50 percent; and it has been borne in greatest measure by the more highly paid knitters rather than by the less skilled and poorly paid women workers. Each reduction, however, has led to equal or greater reductions on the part of non-union plants, some of which work twelve or thirteen-hour days, and some of which have even prevailed upon their employees to work two or three weeks without any pay whatever to keep the companies alive and preserve their jobs. The revivals in employment produced by the wage cuts have been short-lived. The union at last resolved that a stand must be made to stop further wage cuts and to organize the unorganized—even though the strike must be waged in a period of depression and unemployment. Not merely the immediate issues of wages and hours are at stake, but the power of a union which may stabilize labor standards, which coöperates with friendly employers for greater efficiency, and which has steadily been urging a program of research, planning and control to enable the whole industry to operate on a rational basis.

EIGHT young Negroes have been sentenced to death in Alabama on a charge of raping two white girls who were fellow passengers on a freight train.

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There were nine Negroes in the group, but in the case of the ninth, a fourteen-year-old boy, the jury failed to agree. The trials were held in the town of Scottsboro, and there is reliable testimony that race hostility ran high during the proceedings. The judge refused a change of venue despite the fact that thousands of people assembled around the court house, accompanied by a brass band, and indulged in demonstrations of pleasure as each of the four separate trials resulted in a verdict of guilty. The Negroes were only defended by counsel appointed by the court, and it is charged that some of these attorneys made but a half-hearted defense. It is further charged that the accusation of rape was made by a group of white boys who had been on the train and had quarreled with other Negro passengers. Serious allegations were also made against the moral character of at least one of the two supposed victims. The case has been appealed to a higher court, and it is interesting to note that this is being done at the moment when the United States Supreme Court has ruled in another case that anti-Negro prejudice is a legitimate basis on which a juror may be challenged. Even if the eight Negro defendants were actually guilty, and if the judge and jury were powerless under the state law which in most Southern commonwealths makes the death sentence mandatory when a Negro commits a sex crime against a white woman, race prejudice would still be involved; for, as everyone knows, a few years in the penitentiary is the customary punishment throughout the United States when white men are found guilty of similar attacks.

IT NOW seems that the unhappy Guido Serio, who for the last six months has been fighting to prevent himself from being deported to Italy where as an anti-Fascist he faces the probability of life imprisonment, if not a firing squad, is to be refused the privilege of departing at his own expense to the Soviet Union, which is willing to receive him. In a recent interview with newspaper men, Secretary of Labor Doak announced that if Serio were permitted to go to Russia it would not be an act of deportation and hence he could not be barred from this country forever. This, Secretary Doak declared, would be the case if Serio were handed over to the Italian authorities. When it was suggested to Mr. Doak that Serio would probably be shot when he reached Italy, the Secretary of Labor ingenuously replied that he did not know that the Fascisti killed their political enemies. The final decision on Serio's case has not been reached; his appeal will be heard in October. However, if we may judge by the parallel case of the Japanese Communist Kenmotsu, who recently lost his appeal to the higher courts, Serio has but little chance of reaching Russia.

DURING a showing of the Russian film "Ten Days That Shook the World" before students of the University of Oregon, the picture of Lenin was suddenly flashed upon the screen. To the evident consternation and horror of the university authorities, the picture was greeted by a burst of applause from a small group of students. This, of course, was bad enough, but the authorities were thrown into further paroxysms of terror a few days later by an editorial which appeared in the university daily, The Oregon Emerald. This editorial went so far as to say that the demonstration was a good sign, for it gave evidence that the students were "thinking about world problems." The dean of the School of Journalism at once ordered the editorial suppressed and the section which included the editorial withdrawn from the mails. It is understood that the authorities now regard the incident as closed. One can picture them again sinking back into the peaceful dreams of academic somnolence, lulled perhaps by the certitude that their students will no longer think about world problems—or anything else.

Realpolitik in Nicaragua

SECRETARY Stimson has a regrettable habit of announcing an important policy of the American government and then following up his first statement with others, in quick succession, explaining and qualifying the position taken, until it is impossible to say just what, if anything, the original declaration meant. He adopted this practice during the London Naval Conference; and the same thing has happened during the past week regarding the protection of American lives and property in Nicaragua.

For years the revolutionists, directed by General Sandino, have conducted a guerilla warfare against the government; and all the efforts of the Nicaraguan National Guard, plus the United States Marine Corps, have not sufficed to dislodge them from their remote strongholds in the jungle. Ten days ago, undoubtedly aided by the disorganization of the government resulting from the Managua earthquake, the rebels suddenly became aggressive over a wide area. In the course of the fighting, some American lives—at least eight—have been lost, and some American property has fallen into the revolutionists' hands. Washington's official view is that the Americans who have died were civilians, captured and executed in cold blood, though at least one of them was admittedly fighting with the Nicaraguan government forces, and it is not yet certain that others were not doing the same. An additional large number of Americans, including women and children, were forced to flee, and underwent great hardships before reaching the seacoast and safety. The situation as regards the small number of Americans remaining in the remote interior of Nicaragua is serious in the extreme.

On Wednesday, April 15, Washington correspondents were told of an important shift in American policy toward the protection of the lives

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and property of Americans, and presumably of other foreigners, in Nicaragua. While the government issued no official statement, there was no doubt in the mind of any Washington correspondent that a radical departure had been made from the course followed by Mr. Coolidge in the revolutionary period of 1927. It was announced that the United States did not intend to undertake protection of American lives and property throughout the interior of Nicaragua. In particular, we were given to understand that our government would in the future be much less zealous in the attempt to protect property. It was argued that this policy would put the Nicaraguan government on its own responsibility; that native soldiers were better than American Marines in jungle warfare; that the new policy is not really new, but already applied in China and Mexico. As recently as July, 1930, American citizens were warned to get out of several provinces in China, and similar warnings were issued in 1914 to our citizens in Mexico.

The enunciation of this new attitude toward Nicaragua was acclaimed throughout Latin America, and evoked widespread criticism in conservative quarters at home. So violent were the protests that Mr. Stimson felt it necessary to "explain" the government's new attitude, and in doing this has nearly succeeded in explaining it out of existence. He now insists that the only reason we will not undertake to police all of Nicaragua is that it is physically impossible to do so. He strongly implies that the previous statement was misunderstood and that, in fact, no important change of policy has taken place. His critics, however, continue to insist not only that there has been a change in policy, but that it still endures.

The New Republic has for many years protested against both the economic imperialism of the United States in Nicaragua and the political domination of that country which has accompanied it. Nevertheless, we recognize the existence of a situation which has grown up in the course of decades, and the necessity of moving intelligently and with careful long-time planning to ameliorate it. Much of what is wrong in Nicaragua is the inevitable accompaniment of international capitalistic development, and will continue until such development is brought under social control. To be specific: if for the past three or four decades the whole matter of foreign investments for the United States had been under the direction of a Federal Economic Council, and if the developments in Nicaragua had been limited to the sound and desirable needs of the people of that country, it is unlikely that we should have created the animosity toward ourselves which made it possible for Sandino to start a revolutionary movement and keep it alive over a period of years. With the best will in the world, Messrs. Hoover and Stimson cannot eradicate overnight the evils which were allowed to grow up under the complacent Mr. Coolidge and his predecessors in office.

It is impossible, and would be undesirable, to isolate Nicaragua and other Latin American countries from contact with our civilization; but it is both possible and comparatively easy to put that contact on a vastly different basis from today's. As long as we continue our unilateral interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, we shall be under the charge of backing up with our guns the "exploitation by our bankers," and such attempts at amelioration as our government evidently wanted to make last week are bound to be futile. The first step is to internationalize the police power on behalf of foreigners and their property which we now exercise alone. If the United States would invite the coöperation of all the Latin American states when an emergency arises, and offer her military forces as the agent of this coöperative effort, the physical results would probably be about the same, but the whole background, the psychological atmosphere, would be as different as possible.

The next step is the one toward which the present administration is now moving: a warning to American capitalists that when they put their money into Nicaragua, they must be prepared to accept the risks which go with such investments, and will receive no more protection from the United States government than they now do if they invest in France or Germany. The third step, farther away but equally desirable, is control over foreign investments as to their character and extent, in the interest of a planned economy. All this does not imply, as is sometimes said, a divorce between business and government in the matter of foreign investment. It implies, on the contrary, a reversal of the present type of connection. At present, business as a rule goes first and drags government after it. What is needed is that government, in the general public interest both of our own people and those of other countries, should make every effort to curb the rapacity of the financier.

The Meaning of the Spanish Revolution

THE THREE oldest institutions of monarchical Spain—nobility, Church and army—have lost their hold in shaping the destinies of the nation. The provisional government under Alcala Zamora has announced in unmistakable terms that the Church can no longer expect official support, that the army will be drastically reduced and that the nobility will be held responsible for the injustices and mistakes committed during the past centuries of untrammeled domination. Many will doubt if this can be done. It seems hardly possible that a country which up to a few days ago was ruled by the most medieval nobility, by the most overbearing priesthood and by an army larger than that of

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the United States (Spain's population is 22,000,000) could be so radically upset. A brief outline of the position of each of these institutions may help to clarify the Spanish situation.

The Rule of the Nobles.—The nobility has kept in a state of virtual serfdom millions of Spanish peasants—Spain is today about 70-percent agricultural—who have longed for the land which they still cultivate as the Romans used to do, with a wooden plow. That they have during all these centuries accepted the dictates of their landlords and voted as they have been told does not mean that they had no desire for revolt. During the final days of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, one of the members of his Cabinet declared that the Andalusian peasants were completely satisfied with the splendid sunshine that was theirs and a "handful of olives." And so the absentee landlord continued to live in the glamor of courtly Madrid and to be fanned by the breezy air of San Sebastian and Deauville, while Socialist and Communist agitation made terrific strides in the agricultural sections of the country.

When two years ago the ultramonarchist and Catholic newspaper El Debate, after having conducted an exhaustive investigation, found that the Andalusian peasants were getting a wage of three pesetas a day (30 cents at today's exchange), that they spent no less than one hundred days a year in enforced idleness, and that during these days of idleness they listened most attentively to "subversive propaganda," a huge protest was raised throughout the country. But it was too late. The countryside was "infested" with Socialist and Communist organizations.

The Church and the Army.—The Church has been for centuries enjoying usurped power. It was the power granted by the monarchy and the nobility in exchange for "helpful coöperation." The ministers and the king, the soldiers and the government employees, were responsible for those sumptuous manifestations of wealth and power which have for so long been known to the visitor. But popular dissatisfaction spread constantly, not only among the people, but among the lower clergy as well. Toledo, the seat of the primate of Spain, went republican. Priests in Galicia and elsewhere had been giving trouble for years by preaching Communism. The revolt was coming.

Similar conditions existed in the army. The rank and file—unpaid, not very generously fed and well dressed only on state occasions—had been for years annoying the satisfied and contented group of generals. These were the recipients of official favors. But it was difficult for them to revolt, for the espionage system was efficient and, moreover, the soldiers recruited in one region were transferred to distant places and kept under conditions of isolation unfavorable to any concerted action.

The nobility is already leaving the country. The Church can no longer count on official support and very soon will be left without the nearly 100,000,000 pesetas it annually receives from the national treasury. The army will be drastically reduced, a step that will be welcomed by the rank and file recruited from the peasant population for two or three years, without pay, and forced to leave their lands untilled.

The Power of the Socialists.—More powerful than any of the other institutions are the Socialists—the moving force behind the moderately conservative Alcala Zamora, the ever changing Alejandro Lerroux and the firebrand of the last moment, Miguel Maura. It is the Socialists who rule. And what gives them so much power and influence is that their party, except for that in Russia, is the most perfectly organized Socialist party in Europe.

According to the census of 1920, there were in Spain 1,729,449 industrial and commercial workers and 2,822,009 agricultural workers. In the last decade the industrialization of Spain has grown with great rapidity. Of the industrial workers—among whom lies the strength of the Socialist party—there were about 800,000 actively organized and dues-paying members of a union. Of these, about 250,000 paid dues directly to the Union General de Trabajadores, the Socialist organization. Others, with the exception of 47,480 who belong to Catholic or similar unions, were members of professional and syndical unions and sure in most cases "to fall in line" if called to do so by the Socialists.

The Socialist party, by its perfect organization, can at any moment paralyze the life of the country with a general strike. It did so in 1917, and if that strike failed, it was due to skillful maneuvering by the central government, which, after much bloodshed, rallied central and southern Spain to its support by the war cry that the movement was to effect the secession of Catalonia.

Many observers have doubtless been struck by the resemblance between the new Spanish Republic and the Kerensky government of 1917 in Russia, and have asked themselves whether the new regime will be as transitory as was that first Russian Republic. It is, of course, entirely possible that this may happen. Some of the members of the new Spanish government are at least sympathetic to Communism, and if there is any widespread revolt, it is not altogether impossible that the Communists may gain considerable more power.

The Separatist Movement.—Spain, for ethnical reasons, should have never been ruled by a unitary government. Much has been heard of Catalonia. The same is true of other regions or "ancient kingdoms," such as Vasconia, Aragón, Asturias, Galicia, etc. Until a foreign house came to rule the country, each of these "kingdoms" had its own form of government, language and literature. It remained for two foreign houses—that of Haps-

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burg and Bourbon—to build up a tyrannical central government. Charles V decapitated the *"Comuneros de Castilla"*; Philip V bathed the streets of Barcelona in blood. One by one the ancient kingdoms fell into line; but they have never been contented. With the revolution, it is more than likely that they will regain their independence in all local affairs, leaving to the federal government such matters as customs, communications and defense.

Can the King Come Back?—There is no remote possibility as matters stand today for the return of Alfonso.

Despite the likeable personality of the King—a likeable personality which has been "sold" by expert publicity methods—Spain remembers too many other things about him, and not least of all, his love of despotism. Before he could ever have a chance to return, the part he played in the conduct of Moroccan affairs will have become fully known. When in 1921 a committee was appointed to investigate the disaster that cost Spain within a few days the lives of some 40,000 soldiers—10,000 in one day alone, the report of the investigating committee (formed by parliamentarians and a few generals) implicated the king of Spain first and then many generals and officers.

Another aspect of the King's life which will be fully investigated is his financial affairs. There is grave question as to how he came by some of the large fortune which he now possesses snugly tucked away in the bankers' strong boxes in Paris, London and New York. There is good reason to believe that if the facts were to be known, Alfonso would be found to have had a career in dubious finance which might turn many a shady Wall Street promoter a delicate green with envy.

The future of the new Spanish Republic is on the knees of the gods. That its position is precarious goes without saying. At the same time, it is probably safe to predict that if there is another shift, it will probably be to the Left and not to the Right. The Spanish people have endured enough at the hands of autocrats, whether of the nobility, the army or the Church. They now insist on the right to make their own mistakes for a while.

A Union in West Virginia?

BITUMINOUS coal mining, depressed even during the seven years of "prosperity," is sinking still lower in depression. Competition under private enterprise, coupled with better engineering devices, recommended for it by President Hoover and other conservatives, has brought it no nearer to economic health. Meanwhile, the union of the miners, so often attacked by employing interests as the source of the trouble, has shrunk to a mere fraction of its former size and is almost nonexistent in most of the important fields. The absence of a union does not help.

Recently attention has been directed to West Virginia—one of the richest of all the fields, whose development and competition on a non-union basis helped materially to ruin the union districts. Labor organization, so often subdued in West Virginia by private gunmen, by public officials sympathetic to the operators and by reactionary judges, has once more begun to stir. So badly do the West Virginia miners need a union that they are apparently willing to dare all hardships and dangers to obtain it.

They are not being organized by the United Mine Workers—the official A. F. of L. union. A little help was sent by the Illinois faction, which some months ago tried to take over the national organization and provide a more aggressive and intelligent policy than that under which it has suffered so greatly. But now the leaders of the Illinois faction have surrendered and again accepted the presidency of John L. Lewis. Nevertheless, the West Virginia movement carries on, hoping to add to its own determination enough support from some source to buy gasoline for its car and food and clothing for its organizers and discharged local leaders.

Reports come to us that the men are flocking into the locals faster than the organizers can sign them up. Partial victories have been gained in strikes at Ward and Whitesville. No wonder, since many miners receive no more than $2 or $3 a day—when they work—and often do not get any of this in coin of the United States. Living in company houses, trading in company stores, having company doctors, the miner frequently is in debt to his employers on pay day, after his account has been balanced by company bookkeepers. Company scrip, which is discounted as much as one-fourth in other establishments, is often the only money the miner ever sees. Isolated in remote towns, guarded by private police, he is virtually a serf. But he has so little to lose that he responds even to a faint gleam of hope. Will West Virginia provide the spark that is necessary to renew the flame of enthusiasm in all the coal fields? Has labor organization among the miners begun to come back?

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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English Politics: Rebels and Leaders

AN ENGLISHMAN who returns to his own country, as I do, after an absence of six months, is struck by the confusions in its political thinking. The normal divisions of party have ceased to offer even a rough guide to the classification of opinion. In all three parties an open feud is raging. It is true that the more formidable of the two Tory rebels—Lord Beaverbrook—has just come to terms with the machine. He has achieved his purpose in committing his party to an advanced program of protection, both for industry and agriculture. The real disagreement, however, was never over policy, and the reconciliation, in which Mr. Baldwin played no personal part, leaves us in doubt as to how long his leadership can continue. The more bitter of the two malcontents—Lord Rothermere—is not included in the pact, and Mr. Churchill remains in eloquent isolation, a menace to Indian peace and to the unity of his party. One suspects that when it is consolidated, it will be under a more aggressive chief, committed to a more militant attitude.

Among the Liberals a state of perpetual feud is normal. Today the dividing line is clearer and the profession of unity scarcely audible. The party is slowly splitting: two-thirds of it, under Mr. Lloyd George, is committed inevitably, though without enthusiasm, to habitual coöperation with Labor; the other third, under Sir John Simon, must join the Tories, or disappear. Nor is this outward division the full measure of its disintegration. It is losing its faith in Free Trade. It is not only Sir John Simon who professes himself a convert to a general tariff; the two most distinguished economists of the party—Mr. Keynes and Sir Josiah Stamp—are of the same opinion. As a unit this party has ceased to exist. It stands no longer for any sharply defined doctrine, and in every recent election its poll shows a catastrophic decline.

On the surface, Labor preserves its discipline more successfully than its rivals. It has been trained, through a century of industrial conflict, to an ideal of class loyalty. Under the surface, however, there rage dissensions more fundamental than those which divide the Liberals and Tories. The defection of Sir Oswald Mosley and his four or five associates is of little consequence as a political event, but it is of the first importance as a symptom. This party of youth has no following among working-class electors, and the interest which it arouses among many young people of the middle class will hardly enable it to carry a single constituency at the next general election. The too ambitious personality of its leader inspires no confidence, and he lacks understanding of working-class psychology. The Labor movement is for its adherents a greater thing than the present government: it has a past sanctified by heroic sacrifices, and a future visualized in the colors of a Messianic dream.

None the less, the dissatisfaction which Mosley felt against the MacDonald government is shared by a great part of the Labor movement. There is general despair over the timidity of its domestic policy. The Left Wing suspects that it has abandoned Socialism, even as a theoretic creed. The Right Wing, composed of the officials of the labor unions, is angry at its failure to serve their narrower purposes, and talks of asserting its independence. There is throughout the Labor movement a decay of the faith in Free Trade, which it once shared with the Liberals. The party, moreover, is restive under the alliance with Mr. Lloyd George. Its Members in the House perceive that this bond is inevitable. Like all parties in office, they want to prolong their enjoyment of its sweets, for they know that at the next general election defeat is certain. Its adherents outside the House see its situation without this personal bias and realize that it is ceasing to be a Socialist party. Their dismay finds its sharpest expression in the open rebellion of the I. L. P. (Independent Labor Party), which calls for a bold Socialist policy and would welcome the inevitable consequence—a defeat in Parliament on a major issue and an early general election. The I. L. P. has only fifteen trustworthy followers among the 280 Labor members, but there are many who share its outlook but lack its audacity. These Socialist rebels agree with Mosley's estimate of the government, but in other respects the two groups are poles apart. Mosley is an imperialist, and in temperament—if one makes allowance for the moderation of the English tradition—he has something in common with Fascism. The I. L. P. is stubbornly democratic and internationalist; nor will it ever voluntarily quit the Labor party.

Two months ago the unrest among the supporters of the government came near a trial of strength, with Philip Snowden as the challenger. This unusual man is built for combat. He does not bend or compromise, as Mr. MacDonald, on occasion, will. He has a courage which all admire, a consistency which opponents respect and a sharp tongue which critics dread. None the less, with all this personal power he is a negative and conservative force. No Tory leader stands, as he does, for a rigid adherence to the old paths in which Victorian England moved. To him Free Trade is still a religion. He believes in thrift, whether as a national or a personal duty, and carries on the traditions in finance which Gladstone typified. His

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first aim is to reduce the war debt, and all his instincts are for rigid economy. From the outset he opposed every constructive proposal to cope with unemployment. On Mr. Thomas fell the odium of failure, but the real responsibility lay with the Chancellor. As this came to be understood, he exposed himself to the attacks of every group in turn. The Liberals realized that he was the man who stood in the way of their ambitious schemes for the promotion of great public works, to be financed by a Development Loan. The younger school of economists saw in him the most steadfast supporter of monetary deflation. The labor unions blamed him for the failure to reduce unemployment, and still more for a speech which did, in effect, though not, perhaps, in intention, point to the necessity for wage reductions. The Socialists met in him the unbending opponent of all their schemes. Nor does his unflinching adherence to Free Trade commend itself to more than a dwindling and doubtful majority of the party. This man, with his rare virtues, his narrowness and his rigidity, stands for the past and bars the road to every new course. The vital forces which demand experiment and creative innovation must remove him, or accept defeat. The revolt against him might already have become formidable had he not been striken by a painful illness which aroused general sympathy for him. One does not attack a sick man—until he recovers.

It is no accident that every English party shares the same tendency to schism and the same restiveness under its leaders. These are the symptoms of a period of readjustment which presents us with a problem that tradition cannot solve. The world-wide depression may pass, but behind it there lurks our peculiar difficulty of a permanent surplus of labor. No optimist supposes that coal and cotton can ever again recover their former volume of exports, and if they can be reorganized into prosperity, it will be on a shrunken basis of output and employment. Traditional thinkers refuse, as yet, to face the consequences of this immense change, and base their reasoning on the assumption that the old volume of exports can be recovered. They advocate economy, cling to Free Trade and do not shrink from a general reduction of wages. In seeking to lower the costs of production they usually point to our high level of taxation, and propose a reduction of the social services. This "contractionist" tendency is the natural reaction of timid minds to the general depression and explains the curiously negative policy of the government.

The contrary "expansionist" policy would spend freely, and provide outlets for idle capital and idle labor by an ambitious program of public works and industrial reëquipment, financed by public credit. It condemns the paradoxical economy which spends money, with no return, upon mere relief, and shrinks from expenditure on reproductive works. It values the social services and defends the necessary taxation, because they too circulate money, tend to equalize incomes, reduce excessive savings and make a demand for labor. So far from surrendering to the consequences of deflation, it would aim at higher prices. Inevitably, it must face the probability that a high level of labor costs may hamper exports. To meet that difficulty it is prepared to restrict imports, whether by a tariff or by a system of licensed and regulated importation. Confronted with the prospect that a surplus of labor may remain, it turns to agriculture and proposes to lessen our dependence on imported food supplies.

It is easy to present these contrasts of theory in neatly opposed theses. They do not range themselves with the same orderly discipline for purposes of action. One may say that the more advanced Liberals are expansionists (though many of them still cling to free imports) and so, with many differences, are the Mosley group and the I. L. P. The Tories are contractionists, committed to economy, lower direct taxation and wage cuts, but they stress the claims of agriculture and advocate high protection. Thinking is as confused as the problem is desperate. There is wide agreement over the need for the technical reorganization of industry and for collective buying and selling. But few ask themselves where these reëquipped factories, with their higher capacity for production, are to find a market for their potential output.

Throughout this period of crisis and readjustment the Labor government has evaded the main issues. It has rejected as dangerous every suggestion from its own ranks or from the Liberals for the expansion of the home market. It has been equally adamant against Tory specifics for imperial trading. Mr. MacDonald's interest lies exclusively in the international field, and one has an uneasy suspicion that the Ministry as a whole, because it is not sure of itself and suffers from the inferiority complex of its class, has thrown itself upon the guidance of its officials and, strangely enough, of the bankers. To these last it has left the real work of planning and control over the reorganization of industry. The most courageous and resourceful of governments might have failed to cope with the trade depression: this government has not even tried. The lesser questions of the day it sometimes handles well—as in its bold plan for the socialization of transport in London. For its record in history it relies on its liberal handling of international questions—arbitration, disarmament, Russia and India. When one considers the permanent interests of the Labor movement, one could wish that its term of office might end, for only in an interval of opposition will the party think over its policy afresh, and search out more adequate leaders. When one reflects that a general election will bring the Tories back, to break with Russia and coerce India, one curses the destiny which compels us to choose between inertia at home and recklessness abroad.

H. N. Brailsford.

London.

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School for Bums

THEY TOOK a census of the floating unemployed on the East Side, which covered the homeless men. In the Municipal Lodging House, in the missions and shelters, in flop houses and speakeasies where a man can stay all night, sleeping on sawdust, if he buys a drink, they took a census.

The regular salaried census takers had a force of between two and three hundred volunteers, divided up into teams. Each captain had working under him a team of six or more people, flung across the Bowery, down Doyers Street, through Christie Street, on to the waterfront.

They are rounding up the misery of the East Side. Doing it "intensively" as one census taker puts it. This is a queer census. It is a census of misery. It is the count of despair. In New York City for future reference they will tabulate the hopeless and put between covers of books how many men are wandering around shelterless, no prospect of jobs, no place to stay in the daytime, no place to sleep at night. How many are there—the wanderers from Municipal Lodging House to Salvation Army shelter, to flop-house, to speakeasy? How many are there sleeping in the subway or under the bridge at One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Street?

Well, at this writing the figures are being compiled. They are not yet accurate, but it looks as if there are about fifteen thousand homeless men in New York—which would include a couple of hundred homeless women.

The unemployed homeless do not take so kindly to the count. Social workers reported that in the flop-houses and twenty-five-cent-a-bed hotels they were hard to talk to—different from what they had been two years before when a similar count had been taken. Some men did not answer at all. Nor did the social workers wonder at this.

Everyone said the missions were the easiest places in which to take the unemployed census. Take the mission in Doyers Street. It is where the Chinese Theatre used to be. You come into a large irregular room. They hold the mission service where the Chinese actors used to play their interminable plays. Go down a flight of stairs. Here is an underground place. Toward one end, a counter, men in aprons behind it. This is where the men get their food. After that, after they have praised God with hymns, after the prayers, the beds stacked up high against bricked-in arches will be spread down in this space, which holds perhaps three hundred.

The line, before the men are fed, shuffles patiently in front of the census takers. One is a young girl in a raccoon coat, with a clear-cut profile. Her eyes are open with surprise. She has never seen anything like this before. She is embarrassed asking questions—name, age, where born, what trade? They file along, the men in the mission, a long shuffling line. A patient line. Weary feet, broken shoes, worn clothes, unshaven faces.

Very few young men in the missions now. The young men don't go in so much for religion. Many of them over forty, comparatively few under thirty. They crawl along, glad enough to answer the questions and get on. They shuffle along like men already accustomed to waiting, easing themselves on one foot, then on the other. After a couple of hours they get their handout.

A queer census. What happened to John Bentley, 29, house painter, born in Kansas of American parents, union member? Well, there was this depression in the building trades, and he heard of a job farther east. He had a job for a short time. Now here he is in the line. His face is clear-cut, English, with a long upper lip. The type of man who should be upstanding and brisk. His shoulders sag, his shoes are broken. Defeat and bitterness are in his expression. The slight defiance in his answers is of the man who dares you to ask him how he happened to come on a breadline. There are hundreds more with his story.

The beds are being spread out. The girl in the raccoon coat cries out, "My God, they're lying on the floor!" There are not beds enough for everyone. Enough handouts, enough free food of a kind "that don't stand by you," all the drifters will tell you. But not enough flops.

A group of some twenty well dressed people suddenly appears on the stairs. "Ladies and gentlemen," chants a guide, "this was one of the underground resorts of old Chinatown. This used to be the place where Chinatown came to hit the pipe. You would find white people and Chinese together sodden in opium dreams. Behind those bricked-in arches was where the plutocrats and the society people used to come to smoke their pipes in privacy. . . ."

"My Lord!" says the girl in the raccoon coat. *"Tourists!"*

The people from the sightseeing bus peer at the men rolling themselves in blankets. They peer at the bricked-in archways behind which in the old days "plutocrats and society women" supposedly came for an opium debauch. Then they go on.

The census is over. No one else will be allowed in tonight. They are taking care of all they can.

The groups of census takers go on from the mission to the speakeasies. In some of these there is a free lunch. Here, if you buy a drink, they let you stay and sleep on the sawdust or on a chair. In

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some of them there is a drink of free whiskey all around at midnight.

It is not hard to understand why a man would rather sleep in the filthy sawdust than at a mission or in that place of massed misery, the Municipal Lodging House—where there is a somewhat ghastly moment after a man has given up his clothes to be sterilized. After his shower, he stands naked, with all his other naked and miserable comrades, waiting for a nightshirt. The speakeasy, after all, has a touch of home about it, a place where a man can keep his personality, what there is of it.

A group of volunteer census takers meet, men and women. They have together accumulated a series of nightmare pictures of our civilization. They have seen where the men sleep and how inadequate the beds of New York are for the homeless. One social worker sums it up as he exclaims:

"It's a school for bums."

It is a school for bums—crawling breadlines—81,000 free meals daily. No certain place to sleep, no organized shelter.

If you want to know how to make a bum out of a workingman who has had trade, home, security and ambition taken from him, talk to any of the young fellows on the breadline who have been in town long enough to have become experienced in misery. Say a man in this town goes to the Municipal Lodging House for his first night. Until lately, he would have been routed out at five in the morning. Now he can stay until six. He is given breakfast, then he must leave, blizzard or rain. He can go next to a Salvation Army shelter for a handout, and get down to the City Free Employment Bureau before it opens. Or he can find shelter in subways and mark the Want Ads in a morning paper.

If he decides on the Employment Bureau, he is wise to arrive there before the doors open. He will find himself in the midst of a huge company which augments all the time until the opening of the doors. He may have spent two hours there—from nine to eleven. After that, he will not have eaten since his handout at seven at the Salvation Army, and he will have walked quite a lot. The next thing to do will be to put himself on some other breadline. It will take him one and a half or two hours to get his noonday meal.

In the afternoon there isn't very much use hunting jobs; yet there may be a chance at something; at some of the agencies, or perhaps by looking through the scanty Want Ads in the afternoon papers. There is a question then as to how and where to spend the rest of the time. If he has good enough clothes he can kill some time in the library. With discretion, hours can be spent in the terminals of stations. He can go to a museum. If he has a nickel, he can "ride the subways." But if he can panhandle some money, he can at least stay indoors in a speakeasy or Bowery hotel.

It will take him an hour and a half or two hours for his evening meal, and if he is going to the Municipal Lodging House again, he had best be early on the line.

Until recently the Municipal Lodging House was open only one night a month to non-residents and five nights to residents of New York. This restriction has now been removed. There are 3,300 people sleeping at the Municipal Lodging House, of which one hundred are women. The beds are full, and they are sleeping on benches, on the floor.

In the life of this drifting worker there is never any security. He is never sure where he is going to sleep. It is easy to learn to panhandle twenty-five or fifty cents for a night's flop. Between the agencies who help homeless men—the Salvation Army, Municipal lodging houses, the Y. M. C. A. and missions—there are not enough beds. Make a count of all the agencies, even including the new pier, which furnishes shelter for seven hundred more, and the Salvation Army boat that gives lodging to six hundred seamen, besides its other shelters. There is still a slack of thousands for whom there is no free accommodation at present in the city.

The present situation is indeed a school for bums. A thing to sap moral and physical strength. A situation which in a few weeks would make most employable men unemployable, and which puts a premium upon panhandling. It is the deadly frustration of each unsuccessful day of job hunting when, tired and footsore, a man again stands in the long gray queue of the breadline only to seek an uncertain shelter. It is astonishing how soon a newcomer learns the ropes, how quickly it spreads from mouth to mouth where food is better, where flops are to be had.

Usually when times are hard and people are out of work, Fifth Avenue and Broadway know nothing about it. This is the first time these streets have lost their glittering shine. The shabby, shifting, ebbing men out of work have taken it from them.

On a street corner near Fiftieth Street was a store which had been turned into a free restaurant for the unemployed. Well dressed young ladies were cutting sandwiches for all who wanted to come in and get one. In the middle of each table stood a pot of mustard. There were men with well brushed clothes, men who looked like old bums, young white-collar men, all engulfing enormous sandwiches, cheese spread with mustard—three sandwiches to a person and coffee.

There were men whose faces made a spot of yellow, famine color. They had been starving. The men eating behind the plate-glass windows of the corner store were being gaped at by a crowd. Outside two men discussed them.

"That's to keep 'em from riotin'; it's to keep 'em quiet that they're feedin' 'em," said a man who talked like a play by Upton Sinclair.

"Har! Ye talk like a radical," said a man with an English accent. "That's fir hadvertising that they're feedin' 'em, them's society girls in there."

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"It's to keep 'em quiet, I say. If they didn't feed 'em, they'd come marchin' down to the markets. They'd break the windows and loot 'em and help 'emselves. An' what's to prevent 'em from takin' what they want? They's a million of 'em in the city; if they was to march they'd make a procession!"

What if they should march, one wonders—all of them. What if having had their census taken and their misery compiled, they should give an exhibition of their numbers? What then? Tear gas and clubs and arrests, no doubt.

There are other sides to the avalanche of despair. As a part of the widespread slump, the people who thought themselves secure have been thrown into it. The people who have been able to have a college education suddenly find themselves out of a job. No one can take the census of this misery. It doesn't walk the street. It sits and shivers in cold houses. It hides itself.

They hunt in vain for jobs. Or, if they have homes to go to, they return, defeated, to be dependent. Or perhaps, having no home to go to, these people, too, may slip gradually downhill where they must apply for charity.

And what about such people as a friend of mine told me of recently? She was working in one of the emergency employment bureaus on the East Side where daily men came to get the Prosser jobs which are now nonexistent. Daily the little crowd of people gathers outside and waits in vain.

I watched this flood of people who had been once well-to-do, judging by their clothing. People used to steady work, coming in vain with their stories of five children, no work, savings gone.

"It's not nearly as hard as the employment agency I used to work with in Queens," my friend told me. The first day she worked there, she went to nine houses, which had in each case been lost by the young people who were in the process of buying them. Here was a little suburban community where young people, many of them with college educations, had come to found homes, to live where their children could be brought up healthfully.

"There was something more desperate in Queens," my friend told me, "than there is on the East Side, where people are used to the idea of insecurity. The car goes first: the furniture goes; then the house goes; confidence in life goes."

Of the number of people losing their all, because they cannot raise a few dollars, there is no record as yet. Maybe there will never be. One can only generalize and say that the white-collar class is suffering today with the mechanic. The man who has spent thousands upon his education is no more secure than a laborer. The misery, doubt and defeat piles up, an incalculable mountain. There is no census yet of these

MARY HEATON VORSE.

A Federal Economic Council

Concrete Suggestions for a Program of Economic Planning

MUCH THINKING on the nature and methods of our economic system has been stirred up by recent events. The spectacle of the most advanced industrial country in the world suddenly hurled from the heights of prosperity into depression was a shock even to the firm believers in the providential working of natural economic law. Most people have been aroused to a sense of humiliation at the sight of an economically sound country unable to use its resources and to direct its economic destinies. The more or less general reaction has been to call for more conscious control over economic life and for new techniques to attain that end. The single idea which has emerged out of the discussion with special clarity and force is that of planning, and the demand for some kind of economic guidance has been urged by one organized group after another.

It is not necessary to trace here in detail the processes by which the idea of planning made its way into our consciousness. We may have heard the voices of the few economists and men of business who even before the crash had advocated the need of forward planning and budgeting not only within single plants, but within an entire industry, and for all industries considered as a system. We may have been influenced by the vigorous prosecution of the Five Year Plan in the Soviet Union, and by the information which has been filtering in about economic planning in Germany, France and other countries. To a certain extent, the idea is the culmination of processes of social thinking which have been slowly molding our minds for at least a quarter of a century.

Whatever its source, it is a striking tribute to the force of the idea that within six months it has pushed its way out of a vague subconsciousness into the open forum of public discussion and of legislative consideration. In a more restricted way, it has now become part of our framework of government through the passage of the law creating the Federal Employment Stabilization Board. In private industry, it has found application in the new efforts of some industries to plan their development through voluntary associations such as the Petroleum Institute, the Textile Institute and

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others. And in its most comprehensive form, it is now finding expression in proposals for a federal economic council which would aid the American people to visualize their economic life as one vast enterprise and to guide it safely between the Scylla of inflation and the Charybdis of depression.

Economic Planning in France

While the American situation calls for special forms and methods, there is something to be gained from an examination of the experience of other countries. Much might be learned from the Soviet Union, both in a positive and in a negative way, if we had more detailed information on the techniques and procedures of Soviet economy. But in view of scanty information at hand, and of the peculiar characteristics of Soviet economy which make it unavailable as a model, the Soviets may be left out of the picture. Outside of the Soviet Union, attempts to guide and direct economic activities on a national scale have been made in seven countries —France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Czechoslovakia and Japan. But the most notable are those of Germany and France, and it is to their experience that one must turn for suggestions.

French experience with their National Economic Council dates from January, 1925, when the Council was established by government decree. The distinctive features of its organization are compactness and a direct connection with the executive branch of the government. The French wished to avoid a large delegated body which might become a second parliament, and yet they wanted a body representative of all the economically active elements of the people. To attain these two ends, the French adopted the method of arranging the nation into three groups, consumers, labor and capital. The delegates to the Council are selected from the most representative organizations in each of these three groups, such as the National Federation of Production, the Chamber of Commerce, the General Confederation of Labor and so on. The total number of delegates in the Council is forty-seven. Nine of these represent the consumers; eight represent capital; and thirty represent labor, including eleven delegates for management, two delegates for independent artisans, three delegates from teachers' associations, two delegates from civil servants, nine from the General Federation of Labor, and one from the Christian Trade Unions. The representative organizations are designated by the Minister of Labor, but the nominations for places on the Council are made by the organizations themselves.

The French Economic Council meets four times a year and each session lasts ten days. Between these plenary meetings, the business of the Council is carried on by a standing committee of ten and by its permanent secretariat. The Council also has a number of experts who are associated with its work on a permanent basis.

Primarily and essentially, the French Economic Council is an advisory body to the Prime Minister, who is the ex-officio chairman of the Council. The budget of the Council is paid out of the funds of the Ministry of Labor, but that does not affect its legal position, nor does it infringe upon its autonomy. The Council is free to fix its own agenda, and it has the power to settle disputes which arise out of the government's choice of representative organizations invited to send delegates.

In its advisory capacity, the French Economic Council deals primarily with economic measures which are under consideration by the legislature. Any bill introduced into the Chamber of Deputies which bears on an economic question must be transmitted to the Council for examination. The Council then submits its opinion to the Prime Minister, who has to make this opinion public. The Prime Minister, however, is under no obligation to carry out the recommendations of the Council, though he has to inform it of the action taken. Aside from this basic function, the Council makes specific recommendations to the different Ministers and to the Prime Minister which are also advisory in character. And it carries on special studies of a general and technical nature for the purpose of bringing to view the permanent interests of French national economy.

In the five years of its existence, the French Economic Council has proved its practical value as an aid in systematizing the work of the government departments and in quickly preparing a program of action in an emergency. It drew up a comprehensive scheme for relieving unemployment by public works in 1926, when France was threatened by financial disorganization. Its main work, however, has been the making of a survey of French economic life and the mapping of a plan for the overhauling of the national economic equipment. This study has led to plans for the reconstruction of railways, ports and docks, and of other economic instrumentalities, and points towards a systematic and coördinated reconstruction of French economic life in the future. That these plans are not abstract was indicated a short time ago when former Premier Tardieu referred to them during the discussion of the French budget in the Chamber of Deputies and pointed out the possibilities which they offer for a methodical expansion of French economy.

And in Germany

Like the French, the German Economic Council is also based upon the idea of the representation of all economic and social groups. But the German Council, which has been in existence since 1920, and which is based upon a special clause in the Weimar Constitution, resembles more an economic parliament than an advisory body. This characteristic is due to the conditions under which the idea originated in Germany during the revolutionary days of 1918-1919. It is because of this that

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the German Council is larger in size, being composed of 326 members. The greater articulation of economic groups in Germany is reflected in the method of representation, which provides for sixty-eight delegates from agriculture and forestry; sixty-eight from industry; forty-four from banking, commerce and insurance; twenty-four from transport and public utilities; thirty-six from the artisan class; thirty from consumers; sixteen from public officials and teachers; and twenty-four legal and technical experts appointed by the government and the Reichstag. Within these groups, the number of places is divided equally between employers and employees, to keep a balance between opposing forces.

Being in the nature of an economic parliament, the German Economic Council is not attached to any branch or department of the government. It is an independent body with its own budget, amounting at one time to about $150,000 a year, and keeps in close touch with both the Reichstag and the government. It has the right to examine representatives of the government, and its meetings are open to the government. At first, the main work of the German Council was done in plenary sessions, but these proved unwieldy and since 1923 no plenary sessions have been held. The German Council has found it more convenient to work entirely through standing committees, of which there are eleven. The two most important committees, the economic committee and the social-policy committee, are composed of thirty members each. The economic committee has nine subcommittees on foreign trade, coal, lumber, credit for production and so on. The committees meet periodically, have permanent staffs for carrying on their work and call in experts or representatives of different interests when necessary.

The work of the German Economic Council has differed in its character from that of the French because of the peculiar economic and political conditions of Germany. The Council has not considered large general schemes, but has helped in the solution of emergency problems which have followed one another in Germany since 1920. It has dealt with reparations, housing and rents, cartels and prices, and has studied the problems of shipping and exports. It cannot be said that the policies recommended by the Economic Council have been accepted by the German government. German domestic and foreign policy has been shaped by the exigencies of Germany's post-war international situation. Neither can it be said that the existence of the Economic Council in Germany has allayed the conflict of interests and points of view which is such a marked feature of political life in present-day Germany. But there can be no question that the Council has helped to bring into clearer view the facts bearing on important economic problems and to elucidate the issues involved in many problems of national and international policy, and that it has been of great assistance in the departmental work of the German government. Its value is attested by a new bill pending in the Reichstag which aims at making the Council more effective by restricting its membership to 151 and by giving it a more definite place in the legal system.

The Status of the Council

Considering a Federal Economic Council for ourselves, we may start with the suggestion indicated by French and German experience that under present conditions an economic council can be merely advisory in character and that too large a body is undesirable and unwieldy. A council of one hundred delegates would seem large enough to meet our needs of representation and yet not too large for effective deliberation. One plenary session a year lasting ten days or two weeks would seem desirable. The latter part of November would seem an appropriate time, in view of the opportunity it would afford for presenting facts upon which government departments and the President might base some of their recommendations. The plenary sessions would be devoted to the consideration of reports and to the discussion of policies.

The work of the Council should be done through standing committees and a permanent staff. Committees on foreign trade, shipping, banking policy, on standards of living, distribution, taxation, might be composed of fifteen to twenty members each and meet three or four times a year to examine and consider the reports of the staff working on these particular topics. The permanent staff should consist of a director, one or two associates and a number of specially trained men and women in the different fields of economics and government. In view of the nature of the work and the magnitude of our problems, a budget of $500,000 a year might be necessary, though a start might be made with less.

It would seem best to have the Federal Economic Council in the form of an independent commission, operating under an act of Congress and subject to the authority of Congress. The Secretaries of Labor, Commerce and Agriculture might prepare a list of organizations which would be recognized as representative of the different economic interests of the country and which would be required to send delegates to the Council. This list should be submitted to Congress for approval, and should be subject to change in accordance with changing conditions. In view of the large number of trade associations, national labor unions, farmers' associations, it would be best to proceed by arranging the industries of the country in major groups, such as food and kindred products, textiles and clothing, agriculture and forestry, iron and steel and machine industries. Certain national associations, such as the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Manufacturers' Association, the American Federation of Labor, the several national farmers' organizations, should be given

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special place as transcending industrial lines and uniting large economic sections of the people. Special representation should also be given to science, management and research, considered as a single group, on the basis that these hold a peculiar place in society, tending to take an objective view and to reconcile conflicting interests.

The number of delegates allotted to each group should be specified in the act of Congress creating the Council, and the delegates should be elected for a term of two years, half of them, equally from each group, being retired annually. The Secretaries of the Treasury, Agriculture, Commerce and Labor might be ex-officio members of the Council and alternately preside at the meetings of the plenary session. The organization recognized as approved might submit a list of names giving their first and second choice of delegates, from which the President might select the delegates for each term.

Purposes and Technique

The main purpose of the Federal Economic Council should be to present what may be called an annual audit of the United States, giving a connected view of economic developments. Since this would be done annually, the Economic Council would in time be able to indicate economic trends and tendencies. What the President's Committee on Recent Economic Changes was called in to do specially, would be done continuously and in a more coördinated way, supplying a basis of judging whither we were going economically and whether along the lines of our best social interests. In addition, the Council might prepare specific recommendations on special economic problems of urgent national importance and be of assistance to the various government departments and to members of Congress seeking information on economic matters.

For some of its work the Council might have to inaugurate special collections of data, but most of it could be done on the basis of data already being gathered. In fact, one of the prime services of the Council would be to bring into closer coöperation the different state and federal agencies which are now collecting statistical and economic data and to lay the foundation for better methods of economic information. It is understood that the Council would not in any way violate the protection now afforded to private information by government agencies. All members of the staff of the Economic Council should be under the civil service and would be subject to the same obligations and duties as other government employees. The discussions of the annual plenary session and the reports of committees would be the chief medium through which the work of the Council would be made available to the public.

It is not claimed that a Federal Economic Council would at once bring about complete agreement of ideas either as to trends or as to policy. Neither can it bring the millennium of social weal and harmony. But it could lift us out of our present state of spotty social thinking and haphazard economic research and help us to think of our economic problems as interrelated aspects of national social welfare. It could push forward the frontiers of objective economic thinking and reduce the area of unnecessary social conflict. Above all, it should hold out the promise and hope of becoming in time the economic guide of the nation, pointing to dangers ahead and indicating the path along which economic safety lies. In brief, an economic planning council is the growing technique of integrated social coöperation for using scientific method and our conscious powers to harness a dynamic industrial technology in the service of orderly economic progress.

Lewis L. Lorwin.

Grapes Making

Noon sun beats on the leaf; the noon
Of summer burns against the vine,
And thins the leaf with burning air;
Till from the under leaf is fanned,
And down the woven vine, the light:
And where pleached leaves drop layer on layer
To wind the sun on either hand
An echo of the light is bound,
And hushed the blazing cheek of light,
The hurry of the breathless noon;
And from the thicket of the vine
The grape has pressed into its round.

The grape has pressed into its round,
And swings aloof pale green, all won
Of light, between the sky and ground.
Those subtle lanterns frame within
Which flash an apprehended sun,
With musk to perfume half the wind
Turned sweetness in a little skin:
Fresh triumph in a gentle kind,
That yet has ways to be, and years,
And easy countless treasuries
In which all-told is still no sum,
Like a rich heart, well said in sighs,
The careless autumn mornings come,
The grapes fall glimmering to the shears.

The shady sod at heel piles deep,
An overarching shade, the vine
Across the fall of noon is flung;
And here beneath the leaves is cast
A light to color noonday sleep;
While cool as dreams the grapes are swung
Beneath the eyelids of the vine;
And deepening as a tender thought
Green moves along the leaf, and bright
The leaf above, and leaf has caught,
And emerald pierces day, and last
The faint leaf vanishes to light.

Léonie Adams.

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Chain Stores: Menace or Promise?

III: *Do the Chains Undersell?*

THE CHAIN STORE—and the independent store for that matter—is simply a method for distributing goods. It must be judged, therefore, in terms of the efficiency with which it performs this function. It is extremely important to perfect a machine in this country which will distribute the necessities of life at lower prices to the masses of the people. It is also important to find a way of distributing the mass-enjoyed luxuries at lower prices, because in no other way can the producing machine with its army of employees be kept at work. In the distribution of goods, and particularly of food, there are some other factors to be considered besides price. But it is imperative, from both an economic and a social point of view, that prices should be kept low.

Can the chain store deliver goods from the producer to the consumer at a lower cost and for a lower price?

The prices of merchandise in chain stores compared with independent stores have not been very fully investigated, save in the food field. However, in the field of food distribution, certain recent investigations seem to furnish grounds for concluding that chain grocery stores sell at lower prices than their independent rivals. The argument is frequently made that the chains merely seem to sell cheaper than the independent; that what they actually do is to deceive the public on the prices of a few well known articles and make up the losses on the bulk of the stock carried on their shelves. I am convinced that this contention has not been supported by any actual data. The chain store may have its weaknesses. It may be open to charges of civic indifference and deadening social influence, but that the chain store can and does sell cheaper than its independent rival is a fact that is supported by an almost incontrovertible array of evidence.

In this article I shall present the comparative prices of chain and independent-store groceries collected by students who have recently made surveys and have kindly furnished me with the results of their investigation. Before bringing together these results, I will discuss another survey which caused a great deal of discussion two years ago. This was made by Professor R. S. Alexander of Columbia University. This study was made at the instance of a daily business publication which is actively committed to the cause of the wholesale grocer. I do not say that Dr. Alexander did not proceed with perfect honesty in his study, but these surveys sponsored by interested or convinced parties have a way of coming out right and proving what the interested party is interested in having proved. At any rate the report, after listing comparative prices of fifty different articles sold in chain and independent stores, came to the extraordinary conclusion that in New York City, where the survey was made, the independents were actually selling cheaper than the chains.

There were several features in this survey which seemed to stamp it as worthless. For instance, no one in New York has to be told that delicatessen stores are far more costly to the purchaser of foods than any other form of food store. The delicatessen makes no pretense of being cheap. It is built mainly around the sale of prepared foods and fancy groceries, and ordinary staple groceries are carried in many—if not in most—almost as a side line. Its trade is built on the demand for prepared foods and groceries which arises unexpectedly in the late hours and on Sundays when other stores are closed. In the small town where I live, one of the delicatessen stores buys most of its goods from one of the chain stores and sells them at an advanced price. When, therefore, I found Dr. Alexander's figures revealing delicatessen stores as almost as cheap as the chains, and in some respects cheaper, it seemed to me there were excellent grounds for distrusting all the other findings in his study.

Recently I decided to check up on some of these delicatessen-store figures, just for the purpose of sampling the value of the whole survey. I therefore selected the following items, which were put down as cheaper in delicatessen stores than in chain stores in the same neighborhoods.

I give the names of the articles together with the prices which Dr. Alexander found in delicatessen stores and chains:

	Delicatessens	Chains
Kellogg's bran	17.61	18.86
Royal baking powder	39.70	45.21
Bon Ami	10.82	10.90
Van Camp's milk	9.54	9.81
20 Mule Team borax	12.86	15.21

These figures were gathered two years ago, before the present business depression and at a time when prices were much higher than they are now. However, disregarding this factor, I sent an investigator around to buy these articles in the various delicatessen stores in the districts in which Dr. Alexander made his study. My investigator visited quite as many delicatessen stores as Dr. Alexander's students did. But he did not find one—not a single delicatessen store in any of the districts of Manhattan covered—where the prices of the arti-

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cles were as low as Dr. Alexander's average. I will list below the prices for a number of articles in delicatessen stores. For the sake of compactness I give the name of the article and then a series of quotations representing the prices charged in the delicatessen stores where it was purchased:

Kellogg's bran—Alexander's average, 17.61. Actual prices found—24 cents, 25, 25, 25, 24, 26, 24, 26, 24, 23, 23, 23, 25, 25, 25, 26, 25, 26, 25, 26, 26.

Bon Ami—Alexander's average, 10.82. Actual prices found—12 cents, 11, 12, 13, 12, 12, 13, 12, 12, 11, 12, 12, 11, 12, 12, 12, 12, 12, 14, 14, 14, 13, 14, 14.

Royal baking powder—Alexander's average, 39.70. Actual prices found—45 cents, 45, 45, 45, 50, 45, 50, 45, 45, 40, 40, 40, 45, 55, 50, 45, 55, 50, 55, 50.

Van Camp's milk—Alexander's average, 9.54. Actual prices found—10 cents, 11, 10, 10, 11, 11, 10, 11, 11, 10.

20 Mule Team borax—Alexander's average, 12.86. Actual prices found—14 cents, 15, 15, 14, 15, 15, 14, 14, 14, 14, 15, 14, 14, 15, 15.

How Dr. Alexander's figures can be accounted for I do not know. Certainly this brief check would seem to indicate that they are worthless for delicatessen stores, and I believe they are worthless for all stores.

Now let me give the facts as found by the students whose surveys I have already mentioned. Dr. Edgar Z. Palmer, associate professor of Marketing in the University of Kentucky, made a study of grocery prices in Lexington. Lexington is a small city of 45,000 population and is fairly representative of the region in which it is located and of scores of other cities in the same population class. The town has stores operated by five chain systems, three of them national, two local. It has 175 independent grocers. Dr. Palmer obtained prices on forty-nine articles from forty-four independents, as well as from stores representing the five chains. Less than half of the articles were standard brands where comparison was easy. About a dozen others were staples, such as sugar, rice and fresh milk, where the quality differences were not great. On the other hand, Dr. Palmer attempted to standardize quality by inspection, measurement, weight, etc. This study disclosed the fact that the prices charged in the chains were lower on forty-two articles, equal on four and higher on three.

The extent to which independent prices exceeded chain prices varied. On smoked bacon, for instance, the independents averaged 10 percent higher than the chains. On Calumet baking powder, Crisco, granulated sugar, canned beans, canned green beans, creamery butter and lard the independent prices were from 13 to 19 percent higher. On Kellogg's corn flakes they were 22 percent higher. On Post bran flakes, Arm and Hammer soda and whole-wheat bread they were 25 percent higher, and on bulk American cheese, Jell-O and ordinary white bread they were 30 percent higher.

In making comparisons between chain stores and independent stores there is always the error caused by grouping independents into a single class. I have already pointed out that the term "independent" includes many kinds of groceries, ranging from those small, poorly financed, poorly managed stores with a gross annual turnover of less than $25,000 a year up to the well financed, intelligently managed independents ranging from a gross of $50,000 to several hundred thousand dollars a year. Of course all chain stores are not alike, but they form a more nearly definable class than do the independents. Dr. Palmer found that all of the chains, from the lowest to the highest priced, could be grouped on a single price level below that of even the cheapest independent stores.

Dr. Palmer undertook to classify the stores into price groups and give each store a price rating. Thus, the standard price on Post bran flakes is fifteen cents. A store which sold Post bran flakes for fifteen cents would be rated 100. A store which sold them for twelve cents would be rated at 80, since twelve cents is 80 percent of fifteen cents. Dr. Palmer gave to each store a rating on every article it sold and then made an average rating for the whole store. A store with a rating of 90 percent, for instance, would be one which sold all of the articles on the list at 90 percent of the standard price. It would be a store in which the buyer could save 10 percent of the standard price on all of the listed articles which he purchased. The five chain stores were rated as follows: the lowest at 81.5, the others at 83.2, 85.6, 88.3, 89.6. The independents were rated in six price groups. The lowest had ratings of 92 to 94.9. This referred to only four stores. It will be seen, therefore, that the four lowest-priced independent stores rated from 2.4 to 5 points higher than the highest-priced chain, and from 10.5 to 13.4 points higher than the lowest-priced chain. The rating of all the independents is set down in the following table:

Average Ratio Percent	Number of Stores
92 to 94.9	4
95 to 97.9	9
98 to 100.9	9
101 to 103.9	10
104 to 106.9	7
107 to 109.9	4
110 to 112.9	1

The remarkable fact about this table is that it reveals twenty-two, or about one-half of all the independents, actually averaging higher prices than the standard prices of the articles.

Dr. Palmer's conclusions are confirmed by a survey made in another small city of the same size—Durham, North Carolina. This study was conducted by Malcolm D. Taylor, associate professor of Marketing in the University of North Carolina. Professor Taylor investigated ninety-three stores,

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twenty-four of which were chains and sixty-nine independently owned. The results here were not very different from those obtained in Lexington. The average price of all chain stores was 13.79 percent lower than the average of all independent stores. The average savings in chain stores on various groups of products were as follows:

PERCENT
21.96...the average saving on five soaps
12.43...the average saving on ten breakfast foods
8.99...the average saving on eight beverages
9.54...the average saving on three canned fruits
20.74...the average saving on three cleansers
13.98...the average saving on ten products used in the preparation of foods before they are cooked
15.78...the average saving on seven desserts or materials used as desserts.

Here again we find further evidence of the different classes of independent stores. Professor Taylor selected six of the largest independent stores. In one of these stores he found the prices so low that the chain had a price advantage of only 1.78 percent. In another the chain advantage was 5.96 percent. In a third the chain advantage was 10.6 percent; in a fourth, 12.87 percent; a fifth, 13.69 percent; and a sixth, 14.67 percent. These were large stores. It would have been interesting if the large number of small independents had been bracketed together and compared. Professor Taylor, however, added one interesting feature to his study. He interpreted the results he had obtained in terms of living costs in an average family. He selected twenty articles, using the list of articles employed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in its study of the average family's budget. These various articles were weighted according to the weighting used in the Bureau of Labor Statistics survey. The articles included milk, butter, oleomargarine, lard, Crisco, flour, tea and coffee and several packaged articles. The prices in chains and independents on these weighted articles were compared. The study reveals that a family trading in a chain store would spend $105.67 for these twenty commodities. At the independent store a family would spend $120.83, a saving in the chain of $15.16, or 12.55 percent.

A third study was made by Dr. James L. Palmer, professor of Marketing, and Einar Bjorkland, research assistant, at the University of Chicago. This survey, made in the city of Chicago, embraced 309 groceries, constituting a 4.6-percent sample of all the independent grocery merchants in Chicago. This number included one store from each of four chains. The 305 independents selected were scattered throughout Chicago.

In this Chicago study another element was introduced. The independents were divided into cash-and-carry and service independents; that is, those giving delivery and credit in various degrees. The net results of this study may be stated as follows:

1. Using the weighted arithmetic average in calculating the average price of each item and taking simple arithmetic averages of these seventy-five average prices:
   Chains were underselling cash-and-carry independents by 8.82 percent
   Chains were underselling service independents by 11.54 percent
   Cash-and-carry independents were underselling service independents by 2.98 percent.

2. Using the mode in calculating the average prices of each item and taking simple arithmetic averages of these seventy-five model prices:
   Chains were underselling cash-and-carry independents by 9.32 percent
   Chains were underselling service independents by 11.39 percent
   Cash-and-carry independents were underselling service independents by 2.28 percent.

It should be added that in all of these studies comparisons were based upon regular and not special prices. Both independents and chains use special prices, which affect the cost of food to the housewife in proportion to the amount of shopping she does. However, the studies wisely omitted the special price, which the chains are accused of using so extensively.

The futility of comparing all independents with all chains is again made evident by the spread between high and low prices on various commodities in Chicago. We find Shredded Wheat sold as low as ten cents and as high as twenty cents; Gold Medal flour as low as twenty-three and as high as forty cents, Minute tapioca as low as nine cents and as high as eighteen cents, Heinz catsup as low as eighteen cents and as high as thirty-five cents. We find some cash-and-carry independents selling Heinz vinegar as high as twenty cents and some service independents selling it as low as twelve cents and so on through the list. Grape Nuts is sold at twenty cents a package. Three independents sold it as low as ten cents. Twenty sold it under fifteen cents. One hundred and sixty-five sold it for more than fifteen cents, one charging as much as twenty-five.

These studies were made in widely separated territories and by men who, so far as I know, were disinterested students, making the investigations for themselves and not for an interested party. A fourth study was made by Edward G. Ernst and Emil M. Hartl. They traveled to a number of cities in the South, sampled prices on 400 different brands and visited ten cities in various states in the North and South. I quote their findings because these gentlemen, after finishing their studies, arrived at conclusions very strongly opposed to the chains:

> Our own price comparison reveals two things clearly: first, in the ten communities that we studied there is

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a fair saving on most nationally advertised goods bought at chain stores; second, those who are concerned primarily about price, holding quality only secondary, can get "price goods" at the chain stores. We find that these stores *do* undersell their independent competitors, even in the grocery field. A comparison of prices on 124 standard items shows the independents to be 7.3 percent higher in the ten cities studied. In canned goods more than 400 different brands were recorded, and the chain stores showed an advantage of 11 percent. This latter figure, however, includes brands carried by independents only and special chain-store brands, whose quality cannot be compared. On a few articles not much in demand we find the independents often as much as 20 percent higher than the chains. This excess is doubtless due directly to the fact that a single store cannot afford to buy slow-moving goods in large quantities, as such action would demand an excess of storage and involve the danger of being caught in the event of a sudden price drop.

To this let me add the results of a study made in the small town in which I live. In this town there are ten chain stores and fifteen independents. The independents are grouped into three classes; first, one high-class service grocer doing a business in excess of $75,000 a year; second, five groceries combining either quality vegetable supplies or delicatessen; third, nine other groceries scattered about among the residential neighborhoods and ranging from a gross of $10,000 to $25,000 a year. It is difficult to get prices from independent merchants. If they know you are making a comparison with chain stores, some will report lower prices than they actually sell for. To overcome this I did not disclose my purpose, but made actual purchases. I selected one group of articles—butter, bread, coffee, sugar and eggs. I chose them because in some stores they represent almost half the sales of the store. I give below the prices charged by the chain stores and the prices in each of the three groups as described:

	Chains	High-Class Grocer	Small Grocer	Others
Butter				
Tub	.49	.59	.58	.55
Print	.51	.61	.68	.59
Bread	.10	.12	.12	.12
Sugar (5 lbs.)	.30	.35	.37	.35
Eggs	.53	.61	.60	.61
Coffee	.49			.55

Thus it will be seen that on butter the independents were from 15.7 to 33 percent higher than the chains. On eggs they were from 13 to 15.09 percent higher. On bread they were all 20 percent higher than their chain rivals. Two independent groups were 16.66 percent higher on sugar and one was 23.33 percent higher. On coffee they were 12.25 percent higher.

I chose another group of six articles, well known and nationally advertised:

	Chains	High-Class Grocer	Small Grocer	Others
Kellogg's corn flakes	.08	.10	.10	.10
Nonesuch mincemeat	.20		.30	.30
Borden's milk	.10	.12	.12	.12
Heinz rice flakes	.13	.15	.15	.15
Del Monte peaches	.21		.28	.27
Royal baking powder	.45	.50		.50

Now for a comparison of the prices. It is plain that the independent stores were 25 percent higher on Kellogg's corn flakes. On Del Monte peaches the independents were from 28.5 to 33.33 percent higher. They were 11.11 percent higher on Royal baking powder; 50 percent higher on Nonesuch mincemeat; 14.4 percent higher on Heinz rice flakes and 20 percent higher on Borden's milk.

I do not offer these prices on only ten articles as a definite survey establishing the difference between chains and independents in the grocery field. But I do offer them as a fair example of the prices in my town, which is representative of innumerable communities.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

In his fourth article, to be published next week, Mr. Flynn discusses the chief general criticisms made of the chain stores.—THE EDITORS.

Washington Notes

The Negro Delegates—Who Will Succeed Fess? Curtis and Renomination—Hoover's Future Stand on Prohibition

ASIDE from the efforts to humanize Mr. Hoover, which I mentioned last week and which are continuing with unabated zeal, there have been few developments along political lines in administration circles. It is true that Mr. Robert Lucas, in his ridiculous radio appeal to the South to become Republican, gave new evidence of the ineptitude of Republican management generally and his own in particular. It is true, too, that Mr. Hoover has made two of a series of eight speeches with which it was understood he would defend the administration record and policies. But it cannot be said that either of these speeches did much in the way of favorably affecting public opinion from his standpoint. One was in defense of the Red Cross and a justification of his opposition to federal appropriations to relieve distress, his defense being that such appropriations launched us upon the awful path of the dreaded "dole." The other, so far as I can make it out, was a rather greasy and fulsome eulogy of the Negro race.

From the political angle, this latter speech may appease certain Negro leaders who supposedly were offended by the appointment of Judge Parker to the Supreme Bench, but I doubt it. For one thing, I do not believe it was necessary to appease them. They will not count very much one way or the other in the convention. The ones who will count have been appeased, not to say attached, by that astute and smooth worker in the political vineyard, Postmaster General Brown. On his recent trip South, as I mentioned last week,

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Mr. Brown did some very effective appeasing and attaching. And it was neither his eloquence, nor his looks, nor his favorable opinion of the Negro race, which made his efforts along these lines successful and brought him back to Washington with one of those canary-swallowing looks generally associated with the luckier and more predatory cats.

With this little but exceedingly vital job of tying up the Southern delegates completed, it is not likely there will be any particular developments bearing on the Republican 1932 situation this summer. There will of course be some further bungling and fumbling by the National Committee futility twins—Fess and Lucas—and there will be six more speeches by Mr. Hoover. But the situation is not apt to change and no one expects any clarification of the three really interesting questions which Republicans in all sections—and Democrats, too—are asking.

One of these is who will succeed Mr. Fess as chairman when the time for the active committee conduct of the campaign arrives. It is recognized that a change will be made, but if anyone, including Mr. Hoover, knows whom he has in mind, I have been unable to find it out. The names of Secretary of War Hurley, of David Mulvane of Kansas and of Mr. Brown himself have been mentioned in the dispatches. Those who ought to know scout the idea of any of these three being named. Hurley and Mulvane plainly, they say, would not fit in, while Brown is much more useful and effective in the rear than in the front.

Personally, I think the "corps of correspondents" are overlooking the importance played in the administration political management by Mr. Raymond Benjamin, that more or less mysterious personal friend of the "Chief," brought here some months ago from California. I have no idea that Mr. Benjamin will become chairman, but I do know that he has Mr. Hoover's complete confidence and is clothed with an authority that makes him almost as much of a political power as Mr. Brown. He has not the practical experience of the Postmaster General, but he is fairly shrewd and extremely active. The fact that despite the burst of publicity that greeted his appearance here, he has succeeded in keeping his activities entirely out of print since he took up his office at headquarters, is a tribute to his shrewdness.

The other two questions of interest to which I referred above are, first, whether the Honorable Charles Curtis will be renominated as Mr. Hoover's running mate; second, what Hoover's position on prohibition ultimately will be. Anyone who can answer either or both of these at this time will take first rank as a political prophet. As to the vice-presidency, I think I can safely assert that if Mr. Curtis wants to be renominated he will be. Some time ago this fact was not so clear. Now it is. The Hoover forces are not going to sidetrack him deliberately or turn him down.

The result of any such effort would be exceedingly damaging. It would create resentment in various Old Guard quarters and might easily mean the loss of Kansas in the election. And in the farmers' present inflamed state, Kansas is none too certainly Republican anyhow. So I say with considerable emphasis that Charles will be renamed if he wants to be. Whether he does is a question which neither I, nor, I think, Charles himself can answer. If he thinks the Hoover ticket will be reëlected, I am quite sure he will run again with him. On the other hand, if he thinks the chances are against Hoover's reëlection, I am equally sure Charlie will go out after the senatorial nomination in his state, which he can easily win.

Charlie would, I think, much rather be a Senator from Kansas, starting again at the bottom on the committees, than a defeated candidate for Vice President. Who wouldn't? Under the circumstances, and conceding that Charlie's political judgment and experience are about as good as we have, his decision in this matter will be pregnant with significance. I shall await it with the greatest interest. If he enters the Kansas primaries for the Senate it will be a sure sign he thinks Mr. Hoover is a licked man. If he does not enter, it is a sign he believes Hoover will win. If there is grave doubt in Charlie's mind of this matter, I am quite certain he will play the safer end. Hence, I say again, Charlie's decision on this issue will be interesting and significant.

As for Hoover's final position on prohibition, almost any guess short of a stand for outright repeal may be right. Though I am convinced he will take the Dry side of the fight—that is, he will be Dryer than his Democratic opponent—recent information makes me believe that he will not take the flat-footed, stand-pat attitude on the Eighteenth Amendment that is expected by the Dry leaders and assumed by the Democratic press. On the contrary, I am persuaded that the fight next year will be between the Democrats for repeal and Hoover for revision. In effect, the revisionists will be on the Dry side, but they will not be Dry to the extent of driving the wringing Wet Republicans out of the party.

The practical politicians believe—and I suppose with considerable foundation—that many more voters favor revision than repeal. Revision, in their judgment, is the smart trick. Pressure on Hoover to work out a revision program is intense and unceasing. It comes from various sources—from some of his most important journalistic supporters, from many of his closest personal friends, from some of his strongest political advisers and representatives. I might, for example, mention the fact that Mr. Brown is a Wet, a very strong Wet, who thinks a rigid Dry stand a great mistake for both Hoover and the Republican party. I might mention that another who takes this view is the astute and aggressive Mr. Ogden L. Mills, Under-secretary of the Treasury.

Mr. Hoover has no more loyal friends and supporters than these two men—none more disinterested. Still another I might mention who comes in the same class is the Honorable Henry P. Fletcher, chairman of the Tariff Commission. The reason I think Mr. Hoover will yield to this effort to push him somewhat away from the Dry side is that it is the direction in which he wants to go. He does not want to go very far, it is true, but he does want to go far enough to keep the Wadsworths and Butlers and extreme Wet Republicans from bolting the ticket. In brief, the Republican strategy is to let the Democrats take the extreme Wet stand, while they win over the extreme Drys of both parties and hold the Wets of their own. It is not very high principled, but it looks like good politics—if they can get away with it. At any rate, that's the game.

Washington. T. R. B.

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A Play and a Film

Drama on Macdougal Street Again

THE OLD Provincetown Players' theatre has for some months been showing signs of coming to life. First there was a revival, not so badly done, of the Sacco and Vanzetti play, "Gods of the Lightning." Then there was an adapted and very much cut version of Mayakovsky's "The Bed Bug," not well done, but rather interesting as an example of Communist satire (a theme which recalls a scene in the last section of Bernard Shaw's "Back to Methuselah": a bourgeois frozen in the ice and thawed out to horrify the Communists of the future, among whom his species has become extinct). The most recent production, however, "Precedent," by I. J. Golden, which deals with the Mooney case, is much better than either of these. "Precedent" is a simple and straightforward little chronicle: it doesn't bring much imagination to bear on its subject, but on the other hand it is entirely devoid of theatricality and false heroics. The characters are soundly drawn and very convincingly acted—especially the crooked district attorney, played by William Bonelli. The action moves swiftly and the play is never dull. If, as our American Communists insist, there is to be a real workers' theatre in America, it would probably be something like this.

E. W.

A Rowdy Film

"The Front Page," the riotous drama of newspaper life by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, has now been made into a film which is one of the best things to come out of Hollywood in a year. To be sure, that is not saying very much for it; Hollywood has produced little of importance since "All Quiet on the Western Front." While "The Front Page" is well worth seeing, it is of less significance artistically than as an important event in the social history of the films.

What the director, Mr. Lewis Milestone, has done, is simply to transfer the stage version to the celluloid. Nothing has been added except a small amount of unimportant detail; but what is far more important, nothing has been taken away. All the healthy vulgarity, the bawdy jokes of the Chicago reporters covering the Criminal Courts building, are reproduced. There is just one alteration: as the hard-boiled managing editor speaks into the telephone the famous last line, "The son of a bitch stole my watch," his elbow slips off the desk and strikes a typewriter, the clatter of which covers up the one word which the movies find unspeakable. But it might as well be spoken; everyone in the audience at the performance I attended knew perfectly well what was being said—and no one seemed to mind.

Several critics have pointed out that with the advent of the talkies, Hollywood has perforce begun to produce more sophisticated work: that even the supposedly eight-year-old, ultra-sensitive audience of the movie houses could not endure in dialogue form the vapidities which were the normal diet of the silent screen. "The Front Page" offers startling support of this thesis when it presents, almost verbatim, the dialogue which was regarded as going nearly too far for Broadway, as recently as August, 1928. One would like to know how Mr. Will Hays, with his famous moral code, was persuaded to look the other way while this film was being made. It will also be interesting to see what happens when it comes into head-on collision with the state censorship boards in some of the less civilized commonwealths, such as Pennsylvania.

B. B.

CORRESPONDENCE

Unemployment and Russia

SIR: The article in The New Republic of February 25, entitled "The Balance Sheet of the Five Year Plan," by W. H. Chamberlin, contains the following statement: "It is perhaps a little too soon, however, to be sure that the Soviet economic system has discovered a permanent cure for unemployment."

If I understand the Soviet Plan rightly, the idea is to socialize all land and productive machinery so that the wealth created will go back to the people in the form of shorter hours and higher standards of living. That being the case, the idea of employment or unemployment, as such, becomes obsolete. As it becomes possible, with the aid of the machine, to create more and more wealth in less time, the nation as a whole would simply have so much more leisure. If, by means of machinery, the nation can produce enough for the highest standard of living with a two-hour day or a two-day week, according to the standard used, that will be the length of the work day or week. Hence, in the Soviet economic system there will be no unemployment, but there will be leisure for all.

Toledo, Ohio I. C. Frendberg.

[It remains to be seen whether the Soviet government can permanently effectuate the policy which Mr. Frendberg so clearly states. Skillful balancing of productive units with one another, of productive with distributive agencies, of volume of production with consumers' demands and consumers' purchasing power, will all be necessary to prevent temporary surpluses of labor. The end is not automatically attained merely by the socialization of resources. That only opens an opportunity for management in the interest of the people to function.—The Editors.]

Ford's High Wages

[The following letter was received from an employee of the Ford Motor Company, concerning an interview with Mr. Henry Ford carried by the Associated Press. Mr. Ford was quoted as saying that a dollar will now buy 50 to 75 percent more than it would before the crash. Other statements were that "The average man, however, won't really do a day's work unless he is caught and cannot get out of it. There's plenty of work to do if people would do it. . . . We have had no wage cuts, with more than 80,000 men employed." Naturally the identity of the author of the letter must be concealed, but we are convinced that his statements are true. We have seen his pay envelopes.—The Editors.]

SIR: I am enclosing an interview with Mr. Henry Ford published in The Detroit Free Press. He evidently must be "looney" or thinks every one else is. Please note—he says that a dollar will now buy 50 to 75 percent more than before the crash. I wish someone would ask him the name of a single article that has been reduced 50 or 75 percent. I saw in an article appearing in The Christian Science Monitor of February 20 that retail prices at the end of December were 6.2 percent lower; wholesale prices, 15.5 percent; and wages, 27 percent lower. Note what he says about men working, and ask him to name a location where there is plenty of work. If he has a single man among his slaves that isn't doing a full day's work I should like to see him. He says that he has made no wage cuts. In hourly rates that is probably correct. But I am now doing 64,200 pieces in three days for which I receive $24. Last August I was doing 50,000 pieces in four days for which I was

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paid $32. In August my daily rate of work was 12,500 pieces, it's now 21,400 pieces daily. Since last August my pay has been cut 25 percent, my work increased 28.4 percent. I am being forced to do just as much work in three days now as formerly I did in five. The boss came to me last Wednesday and told me that I had done enough work to fill the week's requirements. I'd have to stay home till Monday. I might as well try to get by St. Peter as to get an article in any Detroit paper. If I wasn't hopelessly in debt and dependent on Ford for daily bread, I'd quit and expose him.

Detroit, Mich. A VICTIM OF FORD'S HIGH WAGES.

Hooked Rugs for Relief

SIR: Some of the blacklisted textile workers in Marion, North Carolina, since the 1929 strike have not been able to get work. Being out of work so long has caused these families much suffering.

Some of the women are making hooked rugs to sell to help buy food for their hungry children. We need a sale for these rugs and will be glad to send them to any person or group who could dispose of one or more for us.

Your order will help feed some hungry family. Will you order now? The prices run from $3 to $15. Please address all orders to me, care of the United Textile Union, Marion, N. C., Box 634.

Marion, N. C. GRACE ELLIOTT.

The Amtorg Protests

SIR: In an editorial in The New Republic of April 8 you stated that the Amtorg Trading Corporation brought pressure upon a certain American corporation, from which it had made purchases, to compel the reinstatement of certain employees who had been discharged.

Amtorg is purely a commercial organization engaged in buying or selling for its clients in the Soviet Union. Its relations with American concerns with which it has business dealings are necessarily and properly limited to the details relevant to that business. The Amtorg Trading Corporation and its officers have not, in respect to the concern you name or any other, attempted to bring pressure or influence to bear in regard to the discharge, or hiring, or reinstatement, of any individual.

M. MENDELSON,
Information Department,
New York City. Amtorg Trading Corporation.

A Program for Progressives

SIR: Is it true that American progressivism has no program? Are we limited to the handful of immediate measures and policies listed by the Washington conference?

Walter Lippmann says that American liberals cannot name "a single concrete principle or policy." And this dictum has been widely accepted by liberals—for example, by The World-Telegram and the Scripps-Howard newspapers.

The merest glance at the history of the progressive movement in the last quarter-century shows that this dictum represents either the semi-liberals of our great Eastern cities, who are under the influence of the pseudo-liberal capitalism of the Owen Young, Dwight Morrow and Otto Kahn variety, or the strangely theoretical intellectuals of the same localities who, in Lippmann's phrase, are aroused to something like unanimity only by "war or some kind of futile or destructive fanaticism." This characterization, while profoundly untrue of the nation as a whole (to which Lippmann applies it), fits exactly the more futile section of our intelligentsia. But neither of these groups has had any relation whatever to our American progressive movement; they have scarcely been aware of its existence.

The American Progressive Movement first showed its strength between 1906 and 1912 by achieving a revolution in the American political system. The direct primaries were won by farmer, labor and other popular organizations working within both parties, against the bitter resistance not merely of the political bosses but of the overwhelming majority of the organized business interests. There is not a reactionary leader in the country today, from Coolidge, Hoover, Dawes, Raskob and Smith to our metropolitan editors and leaders of Big Business, who fails to recognize the momentous import of the primary system.

As Labor, the organ of the Railway Brotherhood and of the progressive shop unions of the A. F. of L., says:

> The primary has enabled the great progressive movement, of which organized labor is part and parcel, to make over the United States Senate; to change that body from a club of corporation attorneys to perhaps the most liberal legislative assembly on earth.

The federal boards and commissions which have done so much to check, and sometimes in a measure to control, certain tendencies of big business, have been organized or at least developed by progressive pressure against the bitter opposition of the overwhelming majority of big-business interests. The fact that these boards have been packed by ultra-conservative members does not in the least argue against their possible utility as the progressive movement grows stronger. The centralization of big business, as Senator Capper says, can only be controlled by the action of the federal government.

Second, and equally obnoxious to big business and the organized business interests of the country in general which nearly always support it, have been the investigations successfully carried on in Washington, investigations put through without exception by militant progressives—the power-trust investigation, the oil-trust investigation, the ousting of Secretaries Daugherty, Fall and Ballinger, the refusal to confirm Warren and Judge Parker and others, and the refusal to seat Lorimer, Newberry, Smith, Vare, etc.

Third, the income and inheritance taxes, fought tooth and nail by a majority of the business interests, especially in their more highly graduated forms, were put through mainly by progressives.

Then as to labor: while the unions did not gain much from the Clayton Act, that Act was voted in in Congress after a prolonged and bitter opposition from organized business and was an undoubted moral victory. These interests opposed with equal unanimity the Furuseth or La Follette Seamen's Act and the Howell-Barkley Railroad Act, both extremely effective measures of the very greatest importance to labor.

Some of the farm-relief legislation may prove ineffective, but a considerable part of it is already producing benefits on a scale and is undoubtedly a lasting part of our economic system. The Chambers of Commerce and banking interests have opposed this legislation—practically in its entirety.

The defeat and partial reversal of the imperialistic policies of Coolidge and Kellogg in Mexico and Nicaragua were clearly a progressive victory. The withdrawal of American Marines from Haiti and the recognition of the revolutionary Latin American governments would hardly have taken place without constant progressive pressure in the Senate. It is certainly not too much to say that practically the whole of our present foreign policy represents a compromise forced by progressivism from big business.

Surely this is a good, healthy beginning of a program. Indeed, the agitation against a special session on the part of the administration, the leaders of both parties and the business interests is due solely to the fear of further progress along these lines through a progressive-controlled Congress.

What organized business fears is not congressional inefficiency but its demonstrated efficiency in the execution of the progressive program.

New York City. WILLIAM ENGLISH WALLING.

The Author of "Lorna Doone"

SIR: I am undertaking the collection of materials for a biography of Richard Doddridge Blackmore, author of "Lorna Doone," and shall be grateful for information that will contribute to a vital portrait of the man. I shall be especially glad to hear from those who knew him personally, and to have copies of his letters. I shall have them copied, and return the originals.

WALDO H. DUNN.

704 Buckeye Street, Wooster, Ohio.

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Literature in the U. S. S. R.

A REGULAR delegate to the world conference to discuss revolutionary literature at Charkov, U. S. S. R., last November would no doubt see another set of values than would a guest whose status was merely that of sympathizer, but to such an outsider the astonishing and stimulating feature was the character of the Russians themselves and the tolerance and breadth of their "correct line," at least as it applies to countries outside of the Soviet Union. The majority present were seasoned revolutionaries, many of them exiles from their own countries. Possibly the leaders were influenced by the example of Panaït Istrati, who had been one of the most enthusiastic members of the first conference three years before, and whose revolutionary ardor had since cooled to betrayal. At any rate, they made no effort to sweep anyone into a purely emotional acceptance of their cause.

None of the guests present had the air of being led around by the nose. Moreover, all the cards were laid on the table, and the guests had a chance to see for themselves what was up. If an iron hand laid down the law it was very neatly and nicely gloved. This will surprise no one who has followed the Soviet policy of conciliation toward other states; and in fact such a policy is not confined to the Russians. Abraham Lincoln took the same generous attitude toward the border states. From the Soviet point of view, other countries are border states to be won to an understanding of their cause.

The speeches at the Congress dealt more with the writer outside than inside the Soviet Union. It is even difficult to get information on the internal situation. There seems to be no doubt that anyone not favoring the present system is not encouraged to write, yet Pilniak was at the banquet which closed the session, and he is one of the "fellow travelers" who has had difficulty with his position. Lebidinsky did not show up at the Congress. His "Birth of a Hero" was talked of everywhere and was almost a political issue. Although his hero becomes a hero, and a Communist one at that, he does so through purely personal experiences—particularly through a love affair with a beautiful woman—and dwelling too strongly on the fate of the individual is not in favor at present. The book was therefore attacked by theoreticians, though upheld by the political powers that be. Everyone talks of the "correct line," and yet there seems to be no agreement on what that is. But, since this line is determined by the political situation, it is evident why the long novel, the psychologically motivated novel, becomes increasingly more difficult to do. As it becomes more difficult, it becomes less popular with writers, and the nervous tension in the country is undoubtedly reflected in the arguments over the "long" and "short" form.

The short or journalistic form is forced on many writers by the task imposed on them—that of describing the changing events of the Socialist state. The change is so rapid that it brings with it neither opportunity nor desire for the long form. Before a book is finished, it may be out of date. This is no time, in the Soviet Union, for literature in the old meaning of the term. A too critical writer may endanger the state and he is silenced. The writer is a part of life; he is a political atom as well as a literary one. He lives in a wartime atmosphere and the country has taken the attitude all wartime countries take, of suppressing the dissenting voices. Nothing comes out of a country during war, and nothing much in the way of literature, as we are accustomed to think of it, can come out of the Soviet Union now. But, while Russian writers are already speculating on whether the old forms may not die out altogether, new forms are arising. Some of the most brilliant writers are glorifying the reportorial function of writing, simply because the times force this function upon them. It is possible that some new vital form of art will arise. Anything seems possible in the Soviet Union today.

The battle between the long and the short form went on in the Congress, but as the discussion concerned countries outside of the Soviet Union, the line was much broader. Sympathizers, for instance, are border people to be courted rather than antagonized. The Soviet delegates were obliged time after time to remind delegates from other countries that the situation in their own land was different from that within the Soviet Union. They were advised to study the role of the intellectual in the revolution, that same intellectual whose bourgeois origin did not pollute his usefulness. Not where you come from, but where are you going, was suggested as the challenge. And to write about workers or as a worker is not enough. It was even suggested that to put entire faith in "workers' correspondence" was a deviation and a dangerous one.

"Workers' correspondence" is a term designating the writing of actual workers. It begins, as a rule, with a letter from the worker to his paper, describing the conditions of his work. As time goes on, his writing is supposed to become better and his form more important. Actually this is not always true. The worker often becomes self-conscious and his language tends to become more and more hifalutin in the worst manner of bourgeois art. The best example of a writer risen from worker correspondence is Hans Marckwitza, the German miner, whose "Sturm Auf Essen" was hailed as a masterpiece by the group that emphasizes the importance of worker correspondence, and criticized for its stilted language and its wooden characterizations by those who are inclined to fight for form as well as content. "Das Brennenden Ruhr," by Greenberg, is another example of a strictly proletarian novel, but it is a badly written book with its few love passages as misty and sentimental as any bourgeois novel, its characters merely types. On the other hand, the Soviet writer Fadayev, author of "The Nineteen," told me that some of the most fascinating books he had ever read were the histories of their factories written by Soviet workers.

Anyone presupposing that the Soviet writers are not interested in good writing is barking up the wrong tree. They are so interested that they even admit their own shortcomings. They seem anxious to slip over the present; it is the future they are counting on. Auerbach, in his keynote speech, dealt not only with literature but with the world process that has brought about socialism in the old Russia. The inevitable historical change is bankrupting the bourgeois world, he said, not only in capital but ideologically. Contradictions in the capitalistic world compel the writer to make a one-sided approach to his problem. The new culture demands cognizance of a whole world, not a part of it. Writers ridden by one point of view, such as D. H. Lawrence, are presenting only part of the scene belonging to a writer of the new culture. This is a period in which the new content is hampered by old forms. But new content will of itself create new forms. The short or little form is only the result of the pressure of the moment. There is no need to argue about the long or short form. The problem must work itself out.

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This, within its limits, is an experimental attitude. It can reconcile Superrealism with Communism, for instance, and accept Aragon, of the French Superrealists, as a representative of the Bureau of Revolutionary Literature in France. It can accept Ernst Glaeser, a "sympathizer" from Germany, and welcome his opinion on the importance of form. It can even refuse to estrange Barbusse without giving him a chance to clarify his position. Within its limits, there is liberality, at least beyond the current conception of Soviet liberality. To me it was new to learn that subject matter, to be valuable, need not even deal with actual workers, so long as the writer is cognizant of the Marxian theory of class. This may still seem limited, and it is, but Auerbach would point out that all literature is limited by the world in which it happens to articulate.

William Carlos Williams, writing in Blues, is not so different from Auerbach when he says, "It is substance that makes their work [that of Joyce, Pound, Stein] important. Technique is part of it—new technique is itself substance as all artists know; but it is the substance under that, forming that, giving it its reason for existence, which must be the final answer and source of reliance. . . . We must realize that it is a world to which we are definitely articulating—or to which we might be, were we all able." The Soviet *world* is different, that is all, and at present the wish to secure this new world is stronger than the wish for good writing. In the Soviet mind, the fortunes of the two are so dependent one on the other that creative writing can be born only through a reborn world. How true this may be is yet to be seen, but something real is stirring there. Perhaps some of the eight books which young men confess they have written, when they are not yet twenty-eight and have gone through wars and held countless political jobs and responsibilities, are not good; they may all be bad, but the excitement about writing is good. Truckloads of books going through the streets on the run are good. Bookstores and book corners everywhere are good. Make no mistake about it, something is up in the Soviet Union. And the proof that they are keeping their heads seems to lie as much in their attitude toward literature and writers outside the Soviet Union as in anything else.

JOSEPHINE HERBST.

A Philosophy of Scientific Method

Reason and Nature, an Essay on the Meaning of Scientific Method, by Morris R. Cohen. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 470 pages. $5.

THE SUBTITLE of Professor Cohen's book best describes its content and value. I know of no recent work, save that of Meyerson, which unites such command of scientific material, ranging from mathematics and physics through biology and psychology to the social sciences, with both insight and the power of lucid exposition. The fullness of material and breadth of topics compel a reviewer to resort to the time-honored device of sending a reader to the book itself.

The main title describes the book from the author's own angle of philosophical interpretation. The first part in particular contains less discussion of actual science and a fuller statement of Mr. Cohen's own standpoint than most of what follows. The epilogue of the book is in "dispraise of life, experience and reality." The first part is in eulogy of reason—a word which Mr. Cohen employs to cover honorifically everything from apprehension of universals or invariants to reasoning and thoughtfulness. In consequence, the "nature" of which his book treats is not so much nature as it confronts and intercepts man in life; still less is it Nature as celebrated by poets: it is nature distilled through the alembic of science and logic. Mr. Cohen's nature is *the* nature, the character, of things, their universals. This, to my mind, is both the strength and the weakness of the book. Not that a thinker is unjustified in selecting for discussion that aspect or property of the world which most attracts his intellectual interest; he is not only justified but compelled so to do, unless he is to treat vaguely and miscellaneously of all things. It is rather that by implication and often explicitly, Mr. Cohen employs the object of his particular regard to cast discredit on that to which he is not personally drawn.

Thus, the strength of the book is its exposition of what science actually does and how it does it, irrespective of philosophical interpretation. Anyone who wants to know about this matter, and who is willing to see popular myths exploded which perhaps he has shared, has a rich treat awaiting him. The book is extraordinary in its comprehensive and accurate learning, and remarkable for clearness of exposition, whenever it deals with the actual subject matter and methods of the exact sciences. If these qualities are less marked when the author is dealing with psychology and the social sciences, the fault lies probably with the present status of those subjects rather than with Mr. Cohen. But philosophically the work suffers, in my estimation, from failure clearly to define issues—a strange defect to impute to a logician. The blurring is apparently due to the author's aversion to certain views opposed to his own, and to a somewhat intense moral conviction of the harm these views work. The aversion is so strong that he cannot endure to dwell upon them long enough to see just what they are, as long as they can be labeled with depreciatory tags.

An instance trifling enough in itself is found in the fact that he introduces his dispraise of life with a quotation from William James about the philosophic movement of the early part of this century. Of it, James said, "It lacks logical rigor, but it has the tang of life." The remark was an innocent comment; taken in its own perspective the historian of philosophical thought will find it just. But in Mr. Cohen's unsympathetic hands, it becomes a text from which is derived opposition to logic and reasonable thought and regard for mere life irrespective of its quality. He imputes to James in another passage an "unavowed definition of experience as immediate and vivid sensations," and a dependence upon British sensationalistic empiricism. In fact, James brought against this type of empiricism the most devastating criticism to which it has ever been subjected on psychological grounds, and insisted upon the importance of experience of objective relations.

These matters are relevant to Mr. Cohen's failure definitely to state the fundamental issue with which he is concerned—that between rationalism and empiricism. By identifying empiricism with a sensationalistic particularism he wins an easy victory for his rationalism. The problem of whether and how actual experience can explain the existence and role of rational thought is therefore never faced. In consequence, the doctrine that reason is something over and beyond experience is not rationally supported with convincing evidence; the position is rather begged.

Since most philosophers, however, are better acquainted with other philosophers than with science, it is well occasionally to have the roles reversed. And in any case it is

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a pleasure to turn from criticizing the book to describing its more positive content. It would require too much space to deal with his treatment of psychology and the social sciences, in discussing the latter of which Cohen's knowledge of law comes into effective play; so I shall speak mainly of his significant treatment of mathematics and physical science.

The book will give little satisfaction to the old-fashioned rationalist, the one who would either deduce the whole complex of the universe from reason or gather all its manifestations under the guardian wings of rationality. That procedure the author designates as pseudo-rationalism; in the traditional sense of the word, his book is much less rationalistic than is, for example, Whitehead's "Process and Reality." Mr. Cohen's fundamental metaphysics is contained in the principle of polarity, the strife and balance of opposites, such as universal and particular, form and matter, the necessary and the contingent. I know of no better exposition of the irreducible character of the contingent than that offered on pages 151 and 152 of the present work. Science is bound to assume, no matter how far back it goes, a given distribution of material particles for which no reason can be assigned; these are just brutely so and so; moreover, all scientific explanation is selective; laws must limit themselves to a small number of variables; and this fact is identical with recognition that for law (and the sum of laws) facts excluded as irrelevant are contingent. Finally, laws themselves have contingency. We can carry back laws to a more general law, but that more general law has undemonstrable terms. In fact, the more general the law, the less deducible, by truism, are its terms. Contingency is final because things in the universe have individuality, as well as having relations which are necessary, universal and invariant.

But having once recognized contingency as an ultimate category, Mr. Cohen is not interested in its interplay with law—that is, with nature as it actually presents itself to us—perhaps because that would take him too close to dispraised "experience." Except when he refers to the fact of contingency as a weapon of criticism of other theories, nature remains for him the character of things as determined in universal relations.

Given the author's standpoint, nothing could be more satisfactory than the treatment of Chapter III of the first book, which deals with the gathering of facts, the ideal of science, induction and deduction, the logic of probability, and the *a priori*. The criticism of current views about induction and deduction is particularly trenchant and effective. One phase of it is well expressed in the statement that the actual growth of knowledge is not from the particular to the universal, but from the vague to the definite. There are no rules by which this growth can be determined; progress into the unknown is always a leap into the dark. "Methods," whether inductive or deductive, are the ways in which we safeguard this leap as best we may: this statement is not made by Mr. Cohen, but it seems to be a fair interpretation. The chapter is especially successful in showing how deduction actually leads to discovery of new truths and facts, and is not *merely* a method of arranging and expounding what is already known.

For the rest, I can only refer to some points which have especially impressed me, selecting them somewhat arbitrarily. Mathematics is identified with logic, while the latter is taken to be, not the science of thought, but the science of invariant orders among all possible entities. It is applied, as in physics, when an order is employed to isolate an object for study and to determine or formulate it in such a way that further significant relations can be computed. As a description of all invariant relations, it is perforce a description also of those which are found in the comparatively small number of possibilities that are actualized. There are several points in Mr. Cohen's treatment of this and related matters not wholly clear to me. He speaks of mathematics as having the character of "rules or formulas of procedure." There are some who would derive the invariant forms of mathematics and logic precisely from this methodological character, rather than from their being characters as such of existence, whether possible or actual. Mr. Cohen justly criticized those who would regard forms in their character of methods as purely arbitrary, but he nowhere discusses the view that while they are *conditioned* by actual existence (and would not otherwise be applicable to it), they are not in themselves characters of existence. Yet this is the crucial issue.

The chapter on mechanism and causality in physics, and the related chapter on vitalism and mechanism in biology, I found particularly noteworthy. They make clear the difference between the earlier notion of mechanics as an assumption that all physical phenomena are to be deduced from the special properties of masses—including of course motion as displacement—and the methodological hypothesis that all phenomena are to be *physically* explained. The actual development of science has compelled a surrender of the former assumption, but leaves the latter intact—a consideration which disposes equally of dogmatic metaphysical mechanism and of the notion entertained by some popular writers on religion and science, that its breakdown opens the way for "spiritual" causation.

I have barely touched on a few of the more important themes which Mr. Cohen discusses with well grounded knowledge and in ways which never fail to illuminate the topic with which he is dealing. I can only hope that my somewhat random sampling will send readers who have a serious interest in the methods and procedures of science to this book, for which the intelligent public is indebted to Morris Cohen.

JOHN DEWEY.

Prometheus

Epistle to Prometheus, by Babette Deutsch. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. 95 pages. $2.

THIS poem, written in various verse manners, is very simple in plan. Perhaps it is too simple, the skeleton too clear. The subject—a hymn or invocation to Prometheus, the Fire Bringer, and then to Fire and all the poetic and historic associations that cluster round it—is not necessarily a minor one; merely, the author has made it so. And the fault seems to lie alike in the verse and the treatment of the idea.

History is too neatly divided here—Socrates and Greece, Jesus, Rome and Jerusalem, the Goths and the fall of Rome, the Dark Ages, down to Lenin, Gandhi and the black night of science. It is, unfortunately, high-school history; and the poet leans heavily upon the reader's immediate recognition of these historical divisions to bolster up her own indirect evocation of this knowledge. If the conception back of the poem has any freshness or originality, it should have infused the details with some freshness, some moving and new sort of knowledge. Take away the Prometheus *leitmotif*, and the reader will get just as much as he does when it is there.

The author has adopted a method honored by T. S.

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Eliot—the method of quotation. There is no time to consider its general validity as a poetic method; the point here is: the quotations chosen, or parodied, in "Epistle to Prometheus" evidence a taste for lesser poets than T. S. Eliot's quotations do. Browning ("the worm's in his heaven") and Poe ("the glory that once was Greece") are decidedly lesser writers than Shakespeare or the authors of the Old Testament. The dignity the poem might have had is lessened by these tinkling echoes, which, by themselves, might not have sounded so thin, if it were not that the author further thinned the other sounds in her poem by an all too simple interpretation of history.

Occasionally the writing is good; some of the figures are striking. The third section, which concerns itself with Jesus on the cross, may have been the most difficult to write; yet it is one of the best. The second section is not without distinction; but in the latter parts, particularly the seventh, there is heard what has been heard over and over again—at its best in "The Waste Land" and "The Bridge"—the plaint in various forms against the "puny purposes" of modern urban civilization.

KENNETH WHITE.

Revolution Made Respectable

Behold America! edited by Samuel D. Schmalhausen. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. 755 pages. $5.

THERE is something to be said for the occasional popular symposium of social criticism as a means of synthesizing the attack of American intellectuals upon current proolems; also as a means of beguiling their floundering middle-class audience into contemplating the totality of current social phenomenon in historical and philosophic perspective. There is a good deal to be said for this symposium, first, because of the outstanding contributions of Robert Morss Lovett, Lewis Corey, William Seagle and Harry Alan Potamkin; second, because all of its thirty-three contributions were probably written during the period since the stock-market crash, while capitalism has been, so to speak, in the red. Some of the authors, accordingly, write in red ink, and a few of them, notably Harry Elmer Barnes and Robert Morss Lovett, seize the strategic opportunity to make revolution respectable. And why not? The Saturday Evening Post every now and then employs Richard Washburn Child and others to make imperialism respectable. We are all members of the same club. Surely it is better to take the wraps off and fight it out in terms of the real issue, even though for some time to come capitalism will continue to make the rules.

With the gradual return of "prosperity," our intellectuals may or may not maintain a revolutionary position: C. Hartley Grattan capably analyzes their capacity for evasion and rationalization in his "Treason of the Intellectuals." But if they don't, it is hard to see how they can retain an intellectual leg to stand on. For the issue is the profit system, and it is a revolutionary issue, inescapable whether one is talking about the law, education, industry, the arts or race relations.

Lewis Corey sharply poses this issue in "Bigger and Better Panics"—one of the clearest and best statistical analyses of the current dilemma of capitalism that has yet appeared in print. It is forthrightly envisaged by Robert Morss Lovett, who points out that "politics as Jefferson stated and Lincoln implied, includes revolution" and that "putting business into politics (or government into business) means revolution and nothing else." Melvin P. Levy, James Oneal, McAlister Coleman and John T. Flynn are equally realistic, although Mr. Flynn gives Wall Street one dubious last chance to be good. In the middle of this rowdy party appears Henry Seidel Canby who writes, believe it or not, "it may seem a contradiction . . . that social welfare work is the great American promise." To the credit of the editor be it said that a half dozen other articles, notably those by T. Swann Harding, Arthur C. Calhoun and A. J. Muste, supply a complete refutation of this statement.

It is easy to see how this symposium might have been a good deal better, both in detail and in organization. Yet it measurably fulfills the promise of its title. The America we are asked to behold is a spectacle of forces and people milling on the edge of a widening revolutionary rift. Capitalism is doing its part by manufacturing bigger and better panics. Our publicists are being forced to choose between "respectability" and self-respect; as a result some of them are landing surprisingly far toward the hot end of the spectrum. This year, as Baron de Meyer would put it, the colors will be red.

I might add one remark for the benefit of the unemployed. Judging from the number of typographical errors in this book, the publisher has a job for at least one good proofreader.

JAMES RORTY.

Fanatic

Hunger and Love, by Lionel Britton. With an introduction by Bertrand Russell. New York: Harper and Brothers. $4.

THE QUALITY of rage today is rare. It is bad manners and doubtful taste to become excited, to lose one's temper and, mentally amuck, to shout and rail at the world gone wrong. The sin of bad manners and questionable taste is never consciously confessed. Even movements have their ethic, their formulated esthetic: what one Communist will say, he'll say deliberately, and another Communist will applaud; the enthusiastic tory needs only to enter his club, and discreet pats will fall upon his shoulders. The man inspired by his rage, almost divine truth shining in his eye, his Adam's apple jumping with the desire to cry, to shout, to prove, is friendless, is alone; nor has he listeners to whom he may speak, but eternally he must rehearse, in his garret, between a bite at an uncooked onion and a gnaw at a slice of bread.

And it is the truth that the reason Mr. Britton's hero, Arthur Phelps, is so unhappy, so unheard, so terribly lonely and unloved, is not because he is a proletarian, and therefore to be repressed forever and exterminated if possible (even proletarians sometimes forget exploited reality, in love, maybe in drink, or in the happiness of friendship), but because he is a fanatic, a maniac, a man possessed by his own one thought, one idea, which is so right, which will so truly solve the troubles of the world, will save it for man, will make it a good world, a fit world. But men are deaf, or men will not hear, will not listen; and Arthur Phelps cries on (in his mind—he has no audience; he is poor, hungry, alone), and a rage possesses him, words become insufficient; a song bursts through the still lips, a jeremiad. There are passages in this novel that are not recollections in tranquility, but oratory, high, shouting, impassioned.

Then he thinks he is growing calm; he stops, and with supposedly Cartesian simplicity, but with hunger still gnawing at his stomach, at his sex organs, he reconstructs the

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world. "There are almost 50,000,000 square miles, but it isn't all inhabitable. . . . Six thousand trillion tons of earth, and on its surface a thin struggling squirming restless film of human life, and this is the ferment which is working them all. The social ferment." He builds a house in which no one will ever live. His made society is perhaps good, fair, happy, but it is a chimera, because it is a society that never will exist. It is hopeless (after reading every page the reaction is of hopelessness), not because it is wrong, it may even be not unworkable, but the man who is shouting seems not quite human, almost mad.

Imagine a man who loves no one, and whom no one ever loves, whom even prostitutes avoid, almost refusing him their paid affection; who has no home, no antecedents, no father or mother he remembers, no kin at all, no one he knows when the book begins, and who is still alone when it is finished; to whom every institution is abhorrent, and the motives of every man he meets suspect; who does not trust a soul on earth, except himself; without tenderness toward anyone, without a friend alive or dead; and this man wants to change the world, and better it.

Why? Why doesn't he become a cynic? Why does he not kill himself? What is he living for? What good will a better world be for him who does not care for men? All of his life he has wanted another pair of trousers to change into. What does he want with trousers? He reads all the time, and finds it ironical that the bookseller for whom he works fires him for reading. Why should he read? He even hates a clerk as a bourgeois, who earns a pitiful two shillings more than he, and despises the runner boy in the book shop because the lad covets his insignificant job. It is not only the system that he hates, but these two men, and the whole "struggling squirming restless film of human life." Why does he not then study worms?

Perhaps Mr. Britton has loaded the dice against poor Arthur Phelps. He lives, with a sort of passion, but not with what is called humanity, not with tenderness, not even with an abstract interest in man. There is an interest, but it is fierce; there is curiosity, but it is diabolical; there is passion, but it is fed by hunger and by rage.

NATHAN ASCH.

Book Notes

ANTHROPOLOGY

RACES OF AFRICA, by C. G. Seligman. *Home University Library. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 256 pages. $1.25.*

In this little volume, Mr. Seligman, who is professor of Ethnology in the University of London, has performed a much needed anthropological survey of Africa. He begins with the Bushmen and Hottentots and ends up with the Bantus and Arabs. In addition to describing the physical and linguistic characteristics of these peoples, he also briefly describes their social organization.

NEGROES OF AFRICA, by M. Delafosse. *Translated by F. Fligelman. Washington, D. C.: The Associated Publishers. 313 pages. $3.75.*

The Associated Publishers have enriched American knowledge of the Negro question by publishing a translation of a well known work of the late M. Delafosse, a French governor who became a leading student of the peoples of West Africa. In certain respects this volume will have more general interest than that of Professor Seligman. The first four chapters describe what is known of the origin and history of the peoples of Africa, including the rise of the famous empires of the middle ages. The author also devotes considerable space to such subjects as political organization, property, the family, social institutions, religious beliefs, morality, art and literature. M. Delafosse believes that largely because of isolation, the African Negroes are retarded, and that they will not catch up in a day or in a century; nevertheless their history is not yet finished.

WIT AND WISDOM OF MOROCCO: A Study of Native Proverbs, by Edward Westermarck. *New York: Horace Liveright. 459 pages. $5.*

The most interesting part of this book, the concluding volume of Dr. Westermarck's notable trilogy on Moroccan culture, is the long introductory essay. It runs to sixty-three closely printed pages and is a penetrating and lively study of the nature and role of proverbs in a culture that has little other literature. The remainder of the volume is the Arabic text and the English translation of 2,013 proverbs. Perhaps the translation does them an injustice, but the proverbs as they appear here do not compare in aptness and compression with their analogues in our own proverbial literature.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

THE END OF "THE WORLD," edited by James W. Barrett. *New York: Harper and Brothers. 273 pages. $2.50.*

A heart-broken rather than heart-breaking book, in which various members of the staff of The New York World describe its last days. The articles repeat one another, they vary in quality, they are marred by the haste with which the volume was assembled, but they are redeemed by the genuine emotion nearly all the contributors display. There is much bitterness toward the Pulitzer brothers, centering around the vaguely hinted charges that the financial plight of The World was much less serious than was alleged in court, that the chief difficulties arose because the paper had been crippled to provide funds for an extravagant scale of living, that if the morning edition had been suspended The Evening World might have continued on a profitable basis, and that the extinction of a great institution and the dismissal of 2,800 employees was therefore not a matter of necessity, but was caused by the desire of at least two of the three Pulitzer heirs to withdraw from an occupation which they found temperamentally distasteful.

YOUR JOB AND YOUR PAY, by Katherine H. Pollak and Tom Tippett. *New York: The Vanguard Press. 348 pages. $2.*

This book by two instructors in the correspondence and extension courses at Brookwood Labor College aims to orientate the wage earner in the field of socio-economic investigation. It begins, therefore, with the worker's own experience and leads him by a series of analyses of wages, unemployment, life on the job, hours of work, industrial accidents and diseases and historical background to an enthusiastic advocacy of independent political action, militant trade unionism and the creation of a socialist society. Those who are not wage earners will find the book highly interesting for its concise presentation of pertinent data and the skill with which it develops its basic argument for devotion to the labor movement.

FICTION

EROS INVINCIBLE, by Ricarda Huch. *New York: The Macaulay Company. $2.*

Seldom does one come across such a perfect throwback to an earlier period in the evolution of the novel: Frau Huch's work, in style and spirit and construction, rightly belongs to the same period and genre as "Jane Eyre" and "Wuthering Heights"; grandiosely conceived, it shows in execution scarcely a trace of modern influence. Her theme is an unsanctified and terrible love which (aided somewhat by cholera) effects the destruction of a North German House of Usher and then, having cleared all obstacles from its path, speedily dies in its fulfilment. "Eros Invincible" is nineteenth-century romanticism; it is also a very distinguished piece of work.

OCCUPIED TERRITORY, by Alice Ritchie. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.*

This sketch of life as led by British army officers and their families in a German village during the Rhineland occupation

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would hardly deserve attention were it not for the curious light which the author—whose style is modeled after that of Virginia Woolf—sheds quite unconsciously on the mental attitude of the Britisher plumped down for administrative purposes on alien soil. Miss Ritchie's people regard the Germans, when these are regarded at all, with amused complacency and unconcern—as if they were tumblebugs, quaint and quite harmless unless they happen to get too close.

THREE STEEPLES, by Leroy MacLeod. *New York: Covici-Friede. $2.50.*

It happens so infrequently that a young American author attempts to write on a grand scale about American life that when one does, no matter how short the achievement falls of its intention, there is reason for a small amount of cheering. Mr. MacLeod, who is a poet of considerable imagination, rolls up his sleeves and tackles a rural community in the Middle West with the earnestness and artistic integrity of a Nëxo or Reymont; he has most of the things necessary to an artist with big ideas, except the knack of investing commonplace people and things with an interior beauty of their own, of making the minutiae of existence seem exciting and important enough to justify transcription. The poetry of the book is not inherent in the characters themselves; it is a sauce poured on by the author.

Contributors

H. N. BRAILSFORD, the British journalist and specialist in international affairs, has returned to England after an extended lecture tour in this country. He is the author of "Olives of Endless Age" and other books and was formerly editor of The New Leader.

MARY HEATON VORSE, who has written a number of novels, has for some years been actively interested in the labor movement. She has reported labor conditions and disturbances in this country and Europe and she made a detailed study of the unemployment crisis of 1914. Her most recent novel, "Strike," was based on the material she gathered during her visits to Gastonia, Elizabethton and Marion during the labor troubles there.

LEWIS L. LORWIN is a member of the staff of the Institute of Economics of the Brookings Institution. He is the author of "Labor and Internationalism," and has contributed to magazines on subjects pertaining to economic coördination and planning.

LÉONIE ADAMS, the author of a book of verse, "High Falcon," has been lecturing during the past months on Victorian literature at Washington Square College of New York University

JOSEPHINE HERBST, the author of "Nothing is Sacred" and "Money for Love," recently returned from Russia. Though she spends most of her time on her farm in eastern Pennsylvania, she has for the last two months been staying at Key West with her husband, John Herrman.

JOHN DEWEY, who has been delivering a series of lectures at Harvard, has contributed so frequently to The New Republic that he needs no introduction.

KENNETH WHITE, formerly an instructor at Harvard, is a poet, playwright and critic. He is a frequent contributor to The Hound and Horn.

JAMES RORTY, the author of "Children of the Sun," a book of verse, recently retired from his profession as an advertising copy writer and is now doing free-lance work at his farm near Westport, Connecticut.

NATHAN ASCH, the son of the famous Yiddish writer, Sholom Asch, was educated in Poland, Paris, Brooklyn, and at Syracuse University. He is the author of "The Office" and "Pay Day," the latter novel having recently been selected by the Czechoslovakian book-of-the-month club. He is now visiting Texas.

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